



Amiga Advisory Council Nomination Ballot, page 12

# Amazing / AMIGA

COMPUTING™

Volume 14 No. 6 1999  
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**TOP  
SECRET**

## Amiga Plans

### WARNING

FOR YOUR EYES ONLY! Due to the sensitive nature of the enclosed material, this information is for Amiga users only. Amiga supporters are asked not to openly discuss or share this information with non-Amiga users unless authorized to do so by an Amiga Inc. executive or in the course of converting non-Amiga users to the Amiga platform. In this way, this sensitive information will not fall into competitor's hands.

### Reviews:

**Amiga Writer**  
**ATEO Tower**  
**Turbo Print**  
**Gold ED**  
**Zombie**



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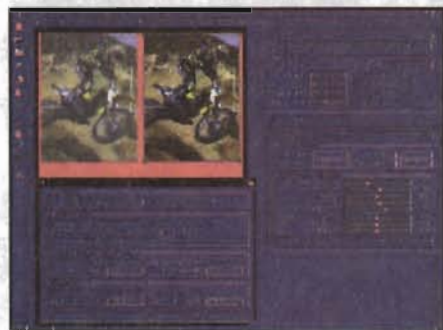
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A sequel to the Gloom series, this new CD-ROM doom style game is from developer Alpha Software, publisher Isonia Entertainment, and distributor Epic Marketing.



## 42 Amiga's Secret Plans

by Don Hicks

A behind the scenes look at what Amiga will say and what they won't say, plus the first part of their secret drawings.

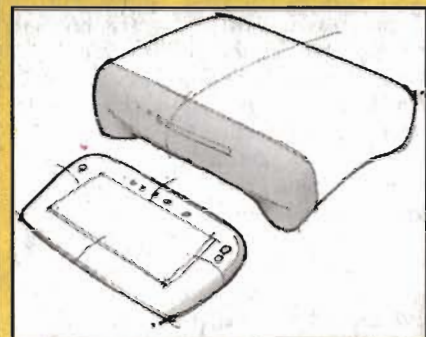
## 12 Amiga Advisory Council Nomination

Complete this form for an Amiga individual you think would best represent your ideas and goals in the new Amiga environment.

## 6 An Open Letter

by Jim Collas, Amiga President

Jim Collas answers some questions and raises even more as he explains Amiga's current position and future direction.



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by Dr. Rick LeFavre

A letter from Amiga's new CTO.

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# Editorial Content

## Is this the most important AC ever?

It is important. Amiga is beginning to release informational "glimpses" into what they are doing for the Amiga and AC will be following every crumb of information. This is especially true of this issue.

We originally planned this issue for a week earlier, but delays by several submissions (not to mention the hooky spent by some advertisers who want to see the new Star Wars release) was pushing us beyond our date. Then I received an invitation to hear Jim Collas, Amiga's president, field questions on Amiga's current plans. I knew then, I would be celebrating the Memorial Day weekend, deep in my basement putting the last pieces of this issue together.

We were given several concept pictures of possible designs of the new Amiga system. Then we were told that only a few (those that had been "discovered" on Amiga's web site) could be released prior to July 1. Unfortunately, that meant only some items could be released now and the rest would have to be released in our next issue. But this opened another opportunity. Why not a series?

### Amiga's Secret Plans

Amiga's Secret Plans (page 42) is the first part of a multipart series on the developing market of the Amiga. According to Amiga press releases, over the next several months, Amiga will be announcing their plans, demonstrating their new operating system, and displaying their equipment to the Amiga community and then the world. Our effort will be to track this progress, review the various directions and opportunities that will become available through these releases, and provide our readers with the background to make sense of the changes.

*Amazing* has been doing this anyway. From articles on Linux and Sega's Dreamcast to the letters from Amiga executives, we have been covering all the twists, turns, dead ends, side roads, and super highways. Now we have a mission: how does all of this effect the Amiga consumer and the world in general?

We began at the source. In just under an hour, Mr. Collas's provided an insight, not only in what Amiga wants to create for the future, but also what they want to protect from the past. The Amiga Classic consumer is a great concern of theirs. While they need to move ahead, they are exploring the means required to keep the classic as a part of their new "operating environment".

Now I was faced with another problem, since most of this issue was already at press, I needed to fit the balance

in the pages left. After many hours of detailed transcription and editing, I whittled the information into several stories in this issue, but, at the end, that left only two pages for the final edit of the conference. I spent many more hours trying to keep in most of what Jim Collas said in his own words. This means that pages 42 and 43 (plus this one) are in a smaller type than normal. Be kind and patient, it is all for a good cause and if the Amiga market expands, maybe we can get more advertisers and increase the pages (as long as there isn't another Star Wars release, Star Trek, Babylon 5, or... oh, never mind).

### WARNING

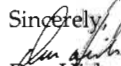
I do need to explain one item, the large warning label on the front of this magazine. Mr. Collas said he has turned down at least a half dozen requests for interviews from major magazines. He stated that, at this point in time, he does not want publicity. He does not want to tip off his competitors. "When we are ready for that type of publicity, I don't believe there will be a problem."

"The difficulty is that we are in negotiations with different technology companies. If it comes out in the press that we have already made decisions on certain technologies, we will get hammered in negotiations."

Our staffing questions went unanswered. Jim Collas stressed his concerns, "I don't want our competitors to know exactly what we are up to, what the size of our work force is and how aggressively we are moving." He promised that more information should be upcoming by the time of the World Of Amiga and AmiWest.

While this is a concern, Amiga has been running a color display ad in the industry read San Jose Mercury News for personnel. If the competition were this interested, wouldn't it be possible to just send a staff member over for an interview?

Even *Amazing* is read by nonstandard Amiga users such as Amiga's competition. Hey, our ego demands that we believe this and work toward that goal. So, for the sake of secrecy, keep this issue to yourself, your friends, your family, and anyone you think should be using an Amiga. But, please keep it away from anyone with a tie or who works for someone worth more than most third world countries.

Sincerely,  
  
Don Hicks  
Managing Editor

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Amazing Computing/AMIGA™

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# FEEDBACK

## A Reply to Mr. Collas' Open Letter last issue and Where is SoftLogik?

Dear Mr. Collas,

I can't tell you how pleased I was to read about your convictions presented at St. Louis as well as the open letter in *Amazing Computing* Vol. 14 Number 5.

Unlike those you've spoken to and seen so far, I am truly at the fringe of the community. I type this on my 3rd Amiga 2000 upgraded with GVP060 and Picasso IV (and I still think it runs circles around the current Wintels I am forced to use at work). I have been close to upgrading to AGA on too many occasions and have ordered then canceled an order with Anti-Gravity for the Boxer when perpetual delays gave me concerns that it would never ship (I'm glad to see the wait appears to finally be over).

I will buy OS3.5 as soon as it is available. I will also buy AmigaNG as soon as it rolls off the line (assuming that it feels like an Amiga). You now guide the destiny of a computer that truly exemplifies what a computer should be about- efficiency. Wintels need upgrades every few months utilizing horsepower in lieu of efficiency. Detroit could build cars with bigger and bigger engines, but at some point they realized that the average car buyer doesn't need horse-

power upgrades every 3 months. The game changed to building cars that maximized resources.

It is my opinion that computers are on the verge of this same thing. People are tiring of buying the latest Wintel knowing it will probably require significant upgrades in less than a year. Macintosh has some potential to be an efficiency-driven machine but it seems to have taken on a "if you can't beat 'em join 'em" mentality, as if speed in Mhz really reflects computing power. I often find my Amiga 2000 (even if stripped of the 060 card) running at 8Mhz doing things that I can't get the Pentium 300Mhz at work to do as well. And I find it absolutely ridiculous that a Wintel needs at least 16Mb of RAM just to run the operating system when I can strip out the memory on the 060 card and run an easier-to-use, STABLE, multitasking Windows operating system in as little as 512K (that's right "K"). I'm still trying to find something on Wintels that is as easy to "plug and play" as those cards I've added to Amiga. And do Wintels really multitask(?), because I find all too often that the program running in the background (actually doing something) often makes some other program run so slowly it is impractical to try to use multitasking on a 300Mhz Wintel? Do Wintels define multitasking as just having more than one program in memory at one time?

I make a 6-figure income and have the discretionary income to buy virtually any computer I want. I could easily buy the latest Wintel or the latest Mac and not think twice about the expense. Indeed, I do envy some things that can be done on those platforms because they do have the support of some software houses that find innovative ways to accomplish certain things on inefficient platforms. But I plow on with the circa 1988 Amiga 2000, which still does things elegantly that can't seem to be accomplished on other platforms that claim to run 100's of times faster.

I seem to miss local user group meetings and seem to have business trips when Amiga has major shows, so no one ever sees or hears from me (except when I buy software or hardware or renew the subscription to *Amazing*). But I am here, dedicated, and anxiously awaiting a next step in Amiga technology. I don't love the technology, nor do I hate Wintels or Macs; I simply appreciate Amiga more than the others. In my opinion, the Amiga philosophy has always been about 2 things: efficiency and value.

I am in the quiet minority (or perhaps we are a majority) at the fringe, ready to embrace AmigaNG with enthusiasm (and dollars). A check is virtually already made out, ready to buy the Amiga for the 21st century. If you make it, we will come.

Darryl Hall  
Cincinnati, Ohio

P.S. I don't really need an answer to this; I just wanted to let you know that there is a bigger Amiga community than what can be counted at shows and in user group roll calls. Build the machine and we will buy it. I for one, can hardly wait!

Dear AC:

Since you are in the publishing business. I was wondering if you could tell me. What has happened to SoftLogik publishing? The makers of PageStream DTP program. Their web site and "digest" are gone. I'm kind of interested in what has happened. Thank you for any help in advance.

Cordially,  
Gary Pyska

*SoftLogik is back! They were moving the business from Missouri to Wisconsin when hit by several delays. During that time, their web site was not maintained by their ISP and they just disappeared.*

*Now they are building a new building and they are using cell phones and a powered generator to get through the next several months. Please see their story and their new release of PageStream 4.0 in this issue's New Products section.*

•AC•

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# OPEN LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY May 1999



## Dear Amigans,

April was a very busy month for Amiga with much activity and good progress. I received over 1200 emails from people around the world, I met with key representatives of the Amiga community in Germany and the U.K, we added to our executive staff, we established relationships with key technology partners, and we finalized our 1999 product plans.

I apologize for not responding to all of the email sent to me. I have personally responded to over 600 emails but was unable to keep up with the volumes. I want to assure you that I read every email sent to me and that they play an important role in defining our future plans. I will continue to respond to as many emails as possible on a personal basis.

This brings me to the main subject of this month's letter: communication. It is important that we set up an effective process for communicating with the Amiga community. Emails and requests for meetings are overwhelming Amiga executives at this time. This volume of

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## It is important that we set up an effective process for communicating with the Amiga community.

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The amount of emails I received from the Amiga community has been overwhelming. Most of them were emails of support and encouragement while many others gave me suggestions and input on technology and products. These emails have been wonderful. They are uplifting, insightful, interesting, and fun to read. People in this community have a great personality. Many were short emails of encouragement but just as many went on for several pages listing insights, suggestions, and opinions. Thank you very much for your emails of support. They have been tremendously encouraging to the Amiga executive team and me. There were, of course, also some emails sent by Amigans who are frustrated by the situation. These emails were also valuable in giving me insight into the mistakes of the past so that I could avoid them as we press toward the future. Please keep the emails coming.

communication is very encouraging but I am concerned that we can't personally respond to every one of them and it will become frustrating to the community.

We are working on plans to improve communications between Amiga and the community. These plans will consist of multiple programs including: the current executive update, an email response team, a new Amiga Advisory Council, polls on future product features, better monthly user group communication, and improved communication to the Amiga press. Detailed information on all of these programs will be posted on our web site in the next several weeks. In addition to keeping the community up to date on Amiga activities, the main goal of these programs is to involve the community in setting future Amiga plans. All of us need to work on this together to make sure we are setting plans that will help the community and allow Amiga to drive the next computing revolution.

## Amiga Advisory Council

One of the planned communications programs is a new "Amiga Advisory Council or AAC (please see the form on page 12). The idea for this program came from my discussions with people in the Amiga community. It is difficult to get thousands of people involved in our planning process so we need to establish a more manageable forum. The plan is to set up an advisory council consisting of people that are viewed as leaders in the Amiga community. Members of this council will be elected by the Amiga community. We are currently working on the details of the election process. This council must represent all major constituencies of the Amiga community so that we can get a full set of concerns and inputs regarding future Amiga plans. We will set-up special message boards, email lists, and meetings allowing the AAC to communicate effectively. Information on AAC meetings and decisions will be communicated to the Amiga community. Keep watching our web site for updates on this program. We will also make sure information gets published to Amiga magazines and user groups.

In late April I traveled to Germany and the U.K. to meet with representatives and leaders of the Amiga community to discuss Amiga's future plans and get the community's help in setting these plans. I apologize to the people that did not have the opportunity to participate in these meetings but I had to keep the meetings to a manageable size.

There were about 30 to 40 people in each country representing developers, dealers, distributors, user groups, and press. I think that these meetings were very informative and productive. They will allow me to optimize our future plans while taking the requirements of the Amiga community into account. To give you an example, we spent a consid-

(continued on page 11)



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For a list of official Amiga dealers,  
please visit us on-line at [www.amiga.com](http://www.amiga.com)





# Four Amiga Shows, Amiga Advisory Council, Toaster Special, Genesis Updated, SoftLogik is back, WolfenDOOM and more!

# NEW PRODUCTS

*And Other Neat Stuff*

## Amiga Advisory Council

Amiga announced the creation of the Amiga advisory council which will consist of 25 members from the community, and the Amiga leadership team. The minimum requirements for the Advisory council are: Minimum 5 years experience with the Amiga, connected to and proficient with the Internet, experience with the ICOA, Brainiac, UGN, Team Amiga, Jay Miner Society, AmigaSOC, D.A.U.G., or similar Amiga community organization, Amiga dealers, distributors or developers, and communicate in English.

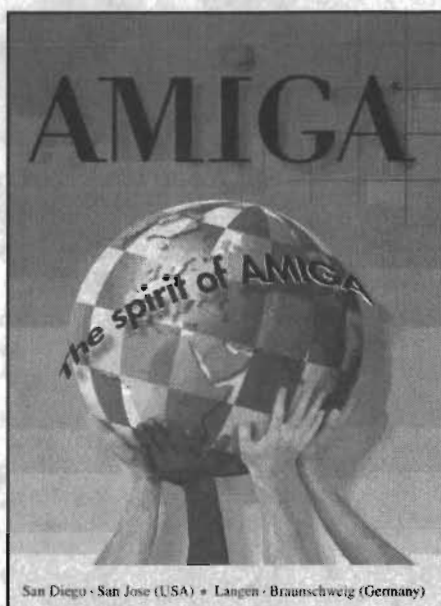
The purpose of the council is to assist the Amiga leadership team in creating new and exciting products for the future, while supporting the existing Amiga Classic. Please see the nomination form on page 12 or visit their website at: [www.amiga.com](http://www.amiga.com)

## Amiga at Both Shows

Amiga will participate at AmiWest99 and World of AMIGA 99 shows in July, AmiWest99 in Sacramento, California and World of AMIGA 99 in London, England. These shows will occur over the same weekend. "Participating in two shows at the same time will present some challenges but we are looking forward to simultaneously discussing our plans for the future with great audiences on two continents," said Jim Collas. "We are looking at ways to connect the two events and show that AMIGA users represent a great worldwide community."

### Please Note:

*The press releases and news announcements in New Products are from Amiga vendors and others. While Amazing Computing/Amiga maintains the right to edit these articles, the statements, and claims made in these reports are those of the vendors and not AC.*



Amiga International's new Amiga poster.

## Dayton Computerfest, An Amiga Show Within A Show

The AmiTech Dayton Amiga User Group has made arrangements with the Dayton Microcomputer Association, sponsor of the Dayton Computerfest to establish an Amiga Area within the show. They are recruiting Amiga vendors, developers, user groups, and individuals that wish to sell, demonstrate, or display Amiga equipment and capabilities to take part in the show.

The show will be August 27-29 at Hara Arena in Dayton, Ohio. The Amiga Show within the Show, with a concentrated group of Amiga vendors and displays at one place in the show will provide a number of advantages for the Amiga user. 1. Access to a concentration of Amiga gear. 2. Availability of a gigantic source of general supplies. Since the show normally has attendance of more than 30,000, it may also provide the Amiga community an opportunity to

make the public, as a whole, more aware. There are lots of accommodations near the show, however, with a show this big it is best to make arrangements as early as possible. If you would like more information about the show or wish to participate contact Ron Schwartz, email: [schwartr@gemair.com.w](mailto:schwartr@gemair.com.w)

## Amiga Downunder 99

The Amiga Downunder 99 show will be held at the Hotel Heritage, in Canberra, the Australian National Capital, on August 21st and 22nd 1999. The show will run from 10 am to 4 pm on both Saturday and Sunday with a Dinner and Trivia Night on Saturday evening. Pointers for further details, including a list of invited guests and stallholders, will appear at <http://www2.dynamite.net.au/krash/> or <http://www.spirit.net.au/~jamesm/CAUSE.html>

## Amiga Extravaganza 99

ARCUG- Indianapolis, IN has announced Amiga Extravaganza 99. The President and founder of ARCUG, J R Wilson, stated, "We're looking at Oct. 8, 9 & 10, 1999—Fri., Sat & Sun (Friday just to setup & talk). Times will run Sat Oct 9th, 10am-6pm EST and Sunday 10am-4pm EST.

Plans are still in the process stage, but you can contact J R Wilson by email at: [jrwilson@midlink.com](mailto:jrwilson@midlink.com), Bryant Pedigo -VP email: [bpedigo@freewwwweb.com](mailto:bpedigo@freewwwweb.com), or visit <http://www.midlink.com/amiga/>

## Genesis Updated

Randomize has announced improvements to the Floppy Disk handling capabilities on their systems. Systems now ordered with High Density Disk Drives will be using the Catweasel from



Individual Computers making them able to not only read and write Low and High Density Amiga and PC disks, but they will also be able to read and write the XTRA-HD Format (2380 KB) as well as the ability to set up drivers for Atari, Commodore 1581 and Mac DD Formats.

Randomize will also offer the Catweasel ZII which includes all the functionality of the Catweasel plus the Buddah providing 3 IDE interfaces capable of 6 IDE/ATAPI devices (12 by putting IDE-Fix 1200 on each of the 3 IDE ports). The Catweasel ZII requires a ZorroII busboard to be present in the system.

### A1200 Parts Available

Randomize has the following A1200 related parts and peripherals available for sale. Items are new unless otherwise marked as "used". There are limited quantities of these items, sales will be first come, first serve until the stock is gone. A listing, with pricing of items available, is at <http://www.randomize.com/amigaproducts/a1200parts.html>

Randomize also offers a growing list of products for your Towered A1200 with products and pricing available: <http://www.randomize.com/amigaproducts/a1200towerparts.html>  
Randomize, Inc., R.R. #2, Tottenham, Ont., L0G 1W0, Phone: 905-939-8371, Fax: 905-939-8745, email: [thom@randomize.com](mailto:thom@randomize.com), [www.randomize.com](http://www.randomize.com)

### PageStream 4.0 from SoftLogik

PageStream 4.0 is the first major update to PageStream in over 3 years. Features include indexing, table of contents, complex page numbers, and figure numbering and figure tables make long documents a snap. Editable kerning pairs, tracking tables, and hanging punctuation make PageStream's typographic capabilities even more outstanding. Doing color work? Then you will be impressed with the color trapping of objects and text. Trying to generate both print and on-line materials? Let PDF and HTML export help you. PageStream4 has something new to offer in every step creating anything from color pages to

technical drawings to newsletters to books.

We are now expecting to ship PageStream 4.0 by August. Any customer who purchases an upgrade or full copy of PageStream 4.0 before it is released will be able to download an advance copy of the program from the Internet, and will receive the final version of PageStream 4.0. For existing owners of PageStream 3.3, the upgrade price to 4.0 is \$75. PageStream 3.1 and 3.2 registered owners can upgrade to 4.0 for \$95.

In a statement on their site at [www.softlogik.com](http://www.softlogik.com), Deron Kazmaier, President of SoftLogik Publishing Corp, stated, "SoftLogik's new home will be located on the same piece of ground that I will be living on. The only problem is that this new building is not complete. This is expected to take a few more months, and then we can get the permits, and then the phone lines and address. (Don't ask, long story about local red tape will result.) Until then, we now have cellular phone service, and we are going to try running the customer database off

# AmiWest '99

JULY 23rd, 24th and 25th, 1999

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# AMIGA

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### Introducing WolfenDOOM!

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In addition to recreating the original missions, Laz Rojas has also created brand new scenarios which go beyond the original scope and concept of Wolfenstein. Scenarios such as Operation: Arctic Wolf and the Astrostein Trilogy take the Wolfenstein fan where no Wolfenstein has gone before, immersing the player in adventures not possible with the original Wolfenstein. All now on Amiga 68k and PPC (PowerUp & WarpUp)!!! Visit: <http://jump.to/apex/> or [http://members.xoom.com/real\\_apex/](http://members.xoom.com/real_apex/).

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to the Flyer, you will need controlling software such as AsimWare 3.9.

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NewTek is offering 4.3 Convenience Upgrade at \$99 for registered 4.x owners (no manuals), 3.x owners may get the upgrade and the 4.x manual for \$159, 1.0 and 2.0 owners may purchase the 4.3 CD, floppy, 4.x manual and 3.x manual for \$199. All upgrades are to registered Toaster users only. LightWave 3D 5.0 manuals are available with the packages at half price, for \$49. Prices do not include shipping and handling. Call 1-800-TOASTER, or send email with your phone number to: [3upgrade@newtek.com](mailto:3upgrade@newtek.com).

### PowerStation Shipping

PowerStation (volume one) for ImageFX is now shipping according to Amiga developer, Nova Design, Inc. PowerStation is a package of ImageFX modules designed to work directly with the PowerPC as a coprocessor. According to Nova Design, this speeds up the specific modules up to ten times the speed of the same module running on a native 68060 processor. In many cases the effects become nearly real-time!

The PowerPC effects are for ImageFX 3.2 or higher only. This first volume of modules includes the following effects, which have all received the PowerPC treatment: Bubble, Fire, Clouds, Liquid, FXForge, Gaussian Blur, as well as JPEG Loader/Save. 'PowerStation' works on any Amiga equipped with a PowerUP supported PPC accelerator with ImageFX 3.2 or higher installed. WarpUP with the new PowerUP compatibility should also work as well. 'PowerStation' is available on diskette for \$99.95 and is available from your favorite Amiga dealer.

Outside the US contact Oberland in Germany or Wizard/Compute in the UK. If you wish to order directly at full retail you can also fax your order to (804) 282-3768 or mail it to Nova Design, Inc., 1910 Byrd Avenue, Suite 204, Richmond, VA 23230

•AC•

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(continued from page 6)

erable amount of time talking about how to bridge the community from the current Amiga platform to the next generation. The current Amiga platform has several years of useful life remaining but people are not investing in it because it is dated and the next generation is around the corner. One suggestion is to port the next generation AmigaSoft™ Operating Environment (OE) so that it runs on a current Amiga configured with a Power PC expansion card. This would not be an optimum configuration but it would extend the life of current PowerPC Amigas. We are looking into this possibility and will keep you updated.

On a personal note, I had a wonderful time in Germany and the U.K. The trip was both productive and very enjoyable. The trip was packed with excellent food and good people. I really enjoyed meeting with people from the Amiga community. After six years of working with executives in the PC industry, it is a breath of fresh air to work with people that have so much passion

and enthusiasm about what they believe in. I especially enjoyed the extended conversations in the bars and pubs. These tended to get even more passionate and creative. To those of you who participated in the events, I thank you for making my trip both productive and enjoyable. In case you are curious, the most challenging part of my trip was sitting still while Petro drove me on the autobahn at 240 km/hour. I thank god for solid and stable German automobiles and good German beer.

Before I end this letter I would like to cover a few more topics that came up frequently in emails sent to me. First, I would like to clarify our hardware product plans. Amiga is planning to come out with a next generation multimedia computer in late Q4 of the year. This computer will have a unique architecture, a great operating system, awesome 3D gaming performance, and advanced multimedia features. I am confident that this computer will meet your expectations for a great next

generation Amiga. Unfortunately, we can't disclose details of the new computer yet since we are under non-disclosure agreements with our technology partners. We also need to be careful about alerting our competition to our

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# AMIGA

## Advisory Board Nomination Form

"In order to make Amiga a great company, delivering the type of innovative products that users desire, it is imperative that the Spirit of Amiga flow throughout our products, and that Spirit is the community." Said Jim Collas - President of Amiga

Amiga is creating an Amiga Advisory Council that will consist of members from the community and the Amiga leadership team. Candidates will be selected over the next 30 days from nominees submitted to Amiga. Amiga will be evaluating and selecting the candidates based on the following criteria.

Past experience and knowledge of Amiga products  
Involvement with Amiga user groups or other Amiga community organizations  
Amiga Dealers and Distributors  
Amiga Developers

\* Advisory Council communication will be in English and will primarily be done via the internet.

Nominee: \_\_\_\_\_

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Reasons for Nomination: \_\_\_\_\_

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You can also find Advisory council information on our web site and submit nomination via the internet at [www.amiga.com](http://www.amiga.com) or [www.amiga.de](http://www.amiga.de).

**Please FAX form to: 619-799-2543**



plans. One thing I can say is that the technology partners we are working with are extremely excited about our direction and technology. There are Amigans in all major technology companies and they are eager to support us in driving a new computer revolution. These partners include some major technology and component companies in the computer industry. We should be ready to disclose more at the World of Amiga and AmiWest shows in July.

The new Amiga multimedia computer will also support a home networked "information appliance environment" that will allow networked devices throughout the house access to the power and features of this computer. I need to clarify the term "information appliances" which is becoming a popular term in the computer industry. "Information appliances" are not digital toasters, refrigerators, and ovens with LCD displays. They are devices such as

## I am more excited then ever about the opportunities for Amiga and the Amiga community.

wireless LCD tablets, Internet terminals, game machines, and digital set-top boxes. These devices will all be connected together through a single network and will be integrated into a single comprehensive operating environment. This is the reason why we use the term "operating environment", or OE, to describe our new software rather than operating system. Our software is much more than the underlying operating system.

In addition to the full multimedia computer described above, Amiga will also develop reference designs for a variety of "information appliance companion devices" such as wireless LCD tablets. Our goal is to enable a full home computing environment rather than just a computer. We will encourage others to develop and ship Amiga-compatible computers and information appliances. To help clarify our plans to

the Amiga community, we are releasing our initial product concept to the Amiga press to publish in the next issues (please see page 42). I hope this helps clarify our product plans. We will continue to disclose details as they become available and as is appropriate.

The second topic that I would like to cover is Amiga support for developers. The Amiga development community is important to us and we will be taking an active role in support Amiga developers. We are evaluating plans for financial support as well as in-depth technical support. We will communicate more about this plan within 60 to 90 days when we also start releasing more technical information for developers.

I have also updated the "major activities" sub-section under the "executive update" section on our web site. This will give you some more detail on the status of Amiga programs so I encourage you to read it. We have also added a Monthly Questions and Answers web page to the "executive update" section. This page will answer the top questions asked in emails sent to me.

In closing I would like to say that I am more excited than ever about the opportunities for Amiga and the Amiga community. It has been a long wait but the Amiga community is still the greatest

community in the computer industry and the time is ideal for a new revolutionary architecture and platform. I will keep you posted on our progress and promise to disclose more details as soon as possible and appropriate.

Sincerely,  
Jim Collas  
President, Amiga

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# Amiga Writer

Germany's Haage & Partner, one of the Amiga's most prolific software houses, steps into action with a *brand new word processing program.*

by Steve Folberg

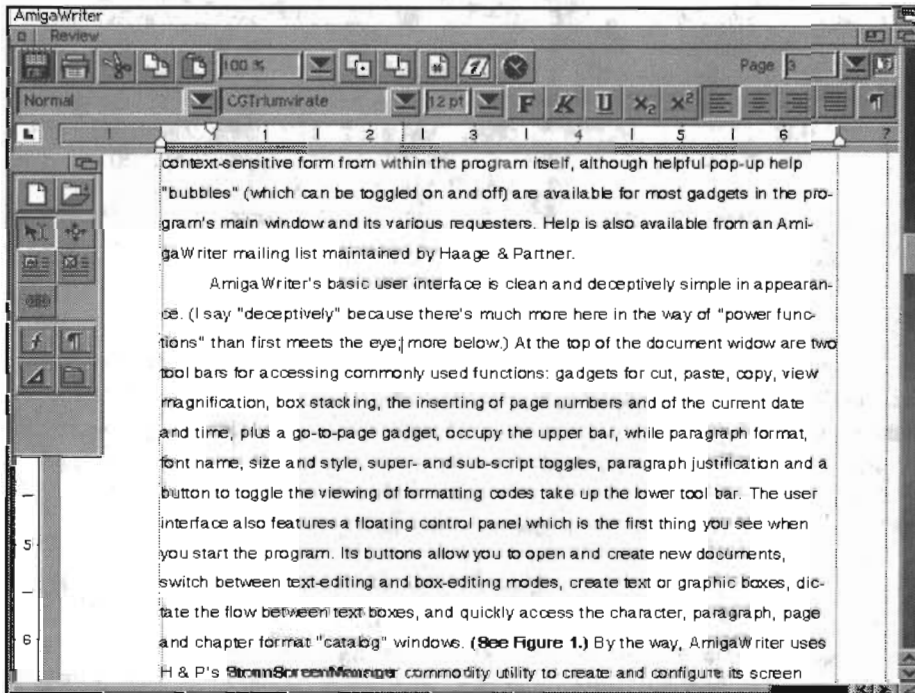


Figure 1.

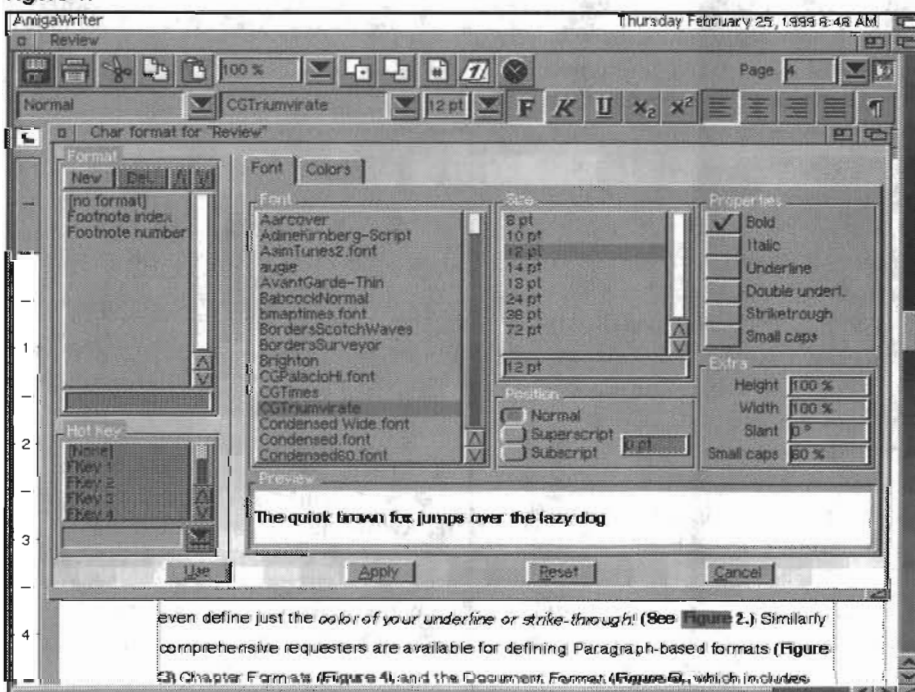


Figure 2.

Way back in 1993, when I was first shopping for a replacement for my aging Kaypro 2X computer (remember those?) I was tottering between buying either an Amiga 1200 (which had just been released) or a "state of the art" PC (which then was a 386SX with 16 megs of RAM, I think). We were lucky enough to still have a dedicated Amiga dealer in town, and I went in to talk to him about the choice.

"What do you want to use the machine for?" he asked.

"Mostly word processing for my job," I said, "but I'd also like to mess around with games, graphics, sound, animation... stuff like that."

"Well, the Amiga's great for all of the graphics and sound applications," he replied. "But honestly, if all you want to do is word processing, you'll *hate* me if you buy the Amiga." Remember, this was the *dealer* talking!

Of course, I made the completely "rational" choice and bought the Amiga (and never looked back) but my dealer wasn't being dishonest about the state of Amiga word processing all those years ago.

Amiga WordPerfect®, which never made it beyond version 4.x (and which was, judging by posts I've seen on comp.sys.amiga.applications, a powerful but ugly and Amiga-hostile beast) had long since ceased development. New Horizons' ProWrite® was just about to bite the development dust, and the same was true for Micro Systems Software's Excellence!® (If you remember or actually *used* Pen Pal®, Kind Words®, Text Craft® or Scribble®, you win the Amiga Word Processing Veteran Award!)

Fortunately, Softwood came to the rescue, first with Final Copy® and then with the much more powerful Final



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Writer®. The latter threw down the hardware upgrade challenge to Amiga owners by insisting on (gasp!) a hard drive and some fast RAM for maximum performance, but rewarded the user with features like style tags, structured drawing tools, EPS graphic importing and a grammar checker.

Then, even later, the aggressively upgraded and feature-rich Wordworth®, an import from Digita in the United Kingdom, finally made it to these shores courtesy of distributor Softlogik. Amiga users again had a choice and the feverish upgrade competition between Softwood and Digita benefited us all with stronger and stronger products for a few years.

It's no news that we now find ourselves in an Amiga market plagued with uncertainty as die-hard users and developers wait for positive and definitive news from Amiga, Inc. Reflecting this uncertainty on the word processing front, Softwood has been silent since the release of Final Writer '97® and Digita is taking a wait-and-see attitude since its release last year of Wordworth 7.01®. It is thus bold and surprising that Germany's Haage & Partner — one of the Amiga's

most prolific software houses — now steps into the breach with a *brand new word processing program, AmigaWriter.*

When I met Haage & Partner's Markus Nerdling at the Amiga'98 show in St. Louis last year, I pressed him for

details on the new word processing program that they were rumored to be working on (then called "Easy Writer"). I asked him how it would compare to Final Writer and Wordworth and he slyly responded, "We're not going after

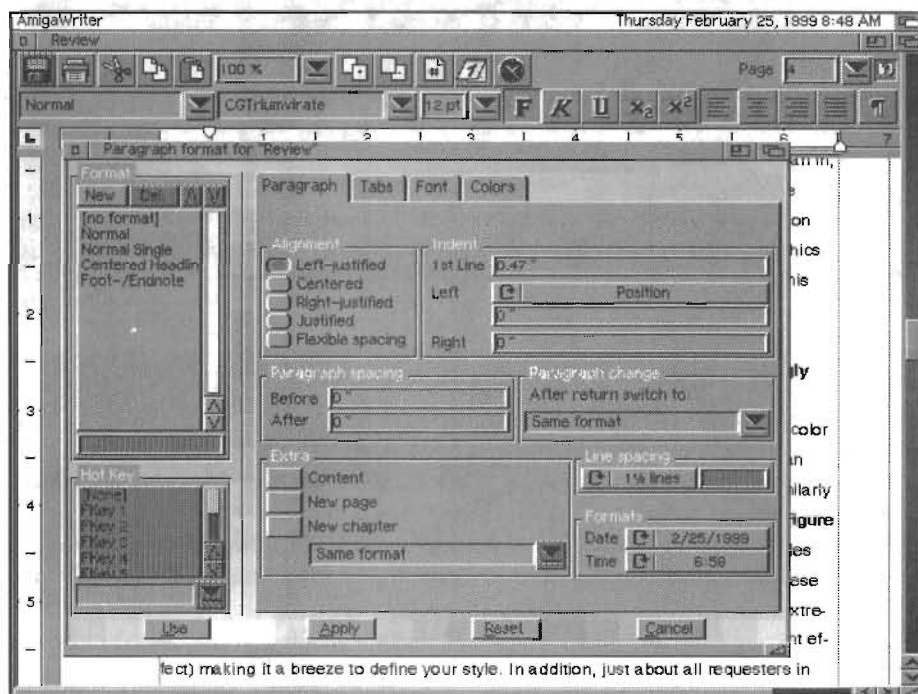


Figure 3.



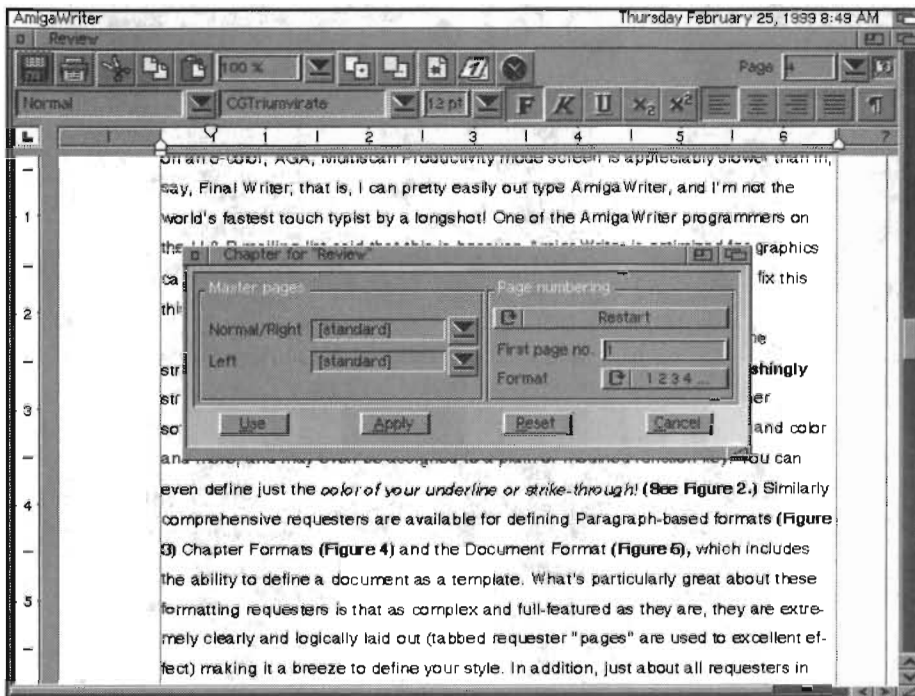


Figure 4.

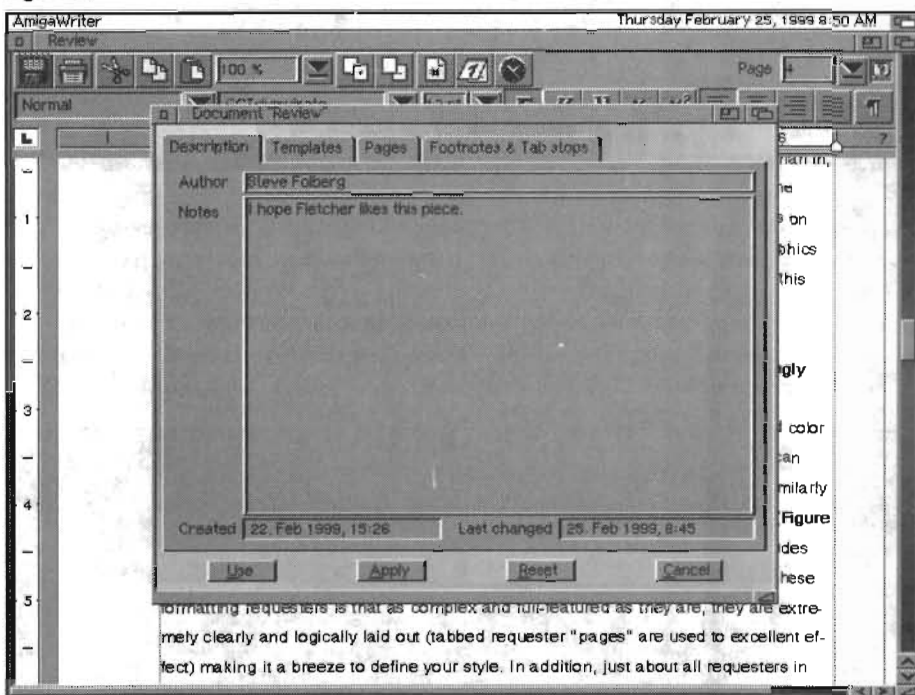


Figure 5.

Wordworth or Final Writer here; we're going after Microsoft Word®!" Ever since that conversation, I've been most anxious to give this new program a test run, and Markus was kind enough to supply a review copy. Let's see how close H & P have actually come in this initial AmigaWriter release to nipping at Word's heels!

## AmigaWriter 1.2

AmigaWriter is currently up to version 1.2. Its designers see it as a "power user's" application, requiring at least a 25 MHz 68030 processor and 8 MB of RAM, a hard drive and OS 3.0 or higher. It ships on three floppy disks and installed on my A1200 without a hitch via the standard Installer program (although, interestingly, it insisted on installing a newer version of Setpatch in my c: directory). Turbo Print users take note:

AmigaWriter installs a version of wizard.library which will crash Turbo Print, but a simple stack size adjustment fix is detailed on the Irseesoftware website.

Copy protection exists only in the form of a serial number which you must enter in order to run the program the first time. There is no paper manual, but documentation is provided in a comprehensive AmigaGuide file and a couple of addenda documents in AmigaWriter format (although the most recent of these detailing the changes from version 1.1 to 1.2 only appeared in German in my copy).

I wish that AW's help file was available in context-sensitive form from within the program itself, although helpful pop-up help "bubbles" (which can be toggled on and off) are available for most gadgets in the program's main window and its various requesters. Help is also available from an AmigaWriter mailing list maintained by Haage & Partner.

AmigaWriter's basic user interface is clean and deceptively simple in appearance. (I say "deceptively" because there is much more here in the way of "power functions" than first meets the eye: more below.) At the top of the document window are two tool bars for accessing commonly used functions: gadgets for cut, paste, copy, view magnification, box stacking, the inserting of page numbers and of the current date and time, plus a go-to-page gadget, occupy the upper bar, while paragraph format, font name, size and style, super- and sub-script toggles, paragraph justification and a button to toggle the viewing of formatting codes take up the lower tool bar.

The user interface also features a floating control panel which is the first thing you see when you start the program. Its buttons allow you to open and create new documents, switch between text-editing and box-editing modes, create text or graphic boxes, dictate the flow between text boxes, and quickly access the character, paragraph, page and chapter format "catalog" windows. (See Figure 1.) By the way, AmigaWriter uses H & P's **StormScreenManager** commodity utility to create and configure its screen (AW isn't a MUI program, but the concept is similar to MUI's Public Screen Inspector).



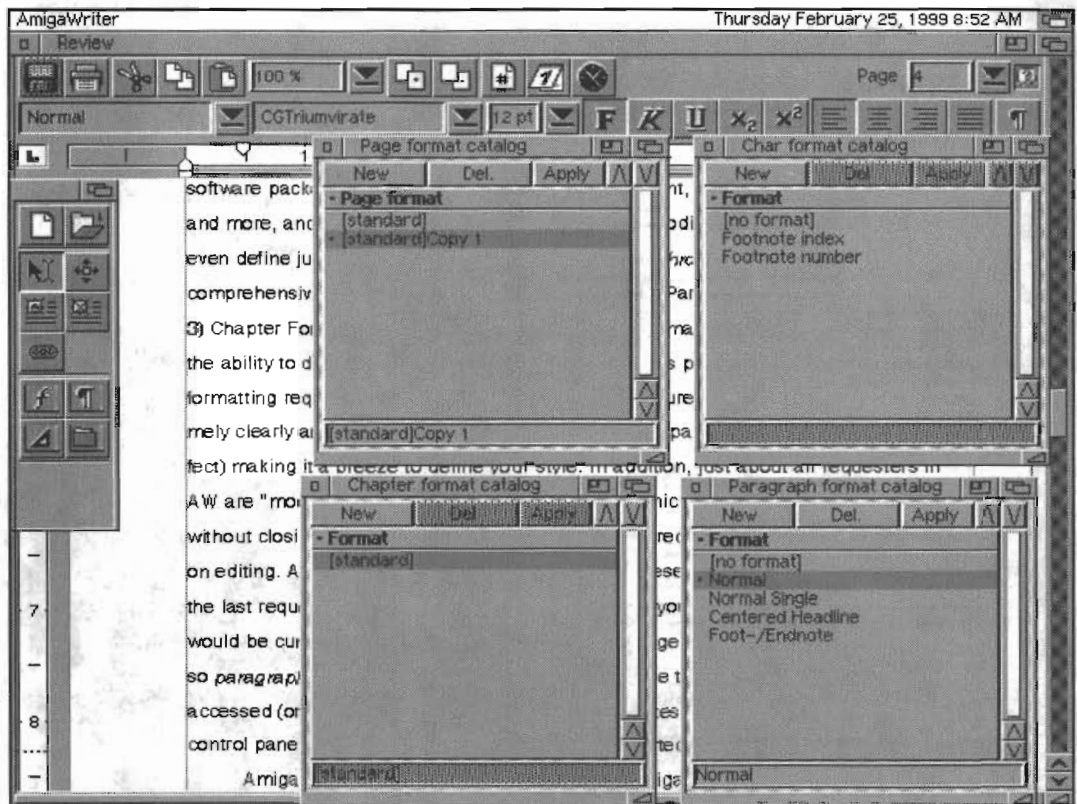


Figure 6.

But having to go to a separate program to configure AW's screen mode (and not being able to switch AW's screen mode without a program restart) is unnecessarily clumsy.

Text selection with the mouse works pretty well: double-click for word-plus-trailing-space and triple-click for paragraph. (I'd prefer triple-click sentence selection and quad-click for paragraph selection.) There is disappointingly no drag-and-drop editing facility (at least yet) and double-click-and-drag (i.e., select by word) is also annoyingly absent.

My chief gripe about AmigaWriter's text handling is that text entry on an 8-color, AGA, Multiscan Productivity mode screen is appreciably slower than in, say, Final Writer; that is, I can pretty easily out type AmigaWriter, and I'm not the world's fastest touch typist by a longshot! One of the AmigaWriter programmers on the H & P mailing list said that this is because AmigaWriter is optimized for graphics cards and not for AGA. I personally suspect that some code-tweaking could fix this, and probably will in a future release.

Beyond this one problem, AmigaWriter's text formatting is probably the strongest and most power-

ful of any Amiga word processor I've used (*astonishingly* strong for a 1.2 release). Character-based formats (called "style tags" in other software packages) may include information about font, size, style, position and color and more, and may even be assigned to a plain or modified function key! You can even

define just the *color of your underline or strike-through!* (See Figure 2.)

Similarly comprehensive requesters are available for defining Paragraph-based formats (Figure 3), Chapter Formats (Figure 4), and the Document Format (Figure 5), which includes the ability to define a document as a tem-

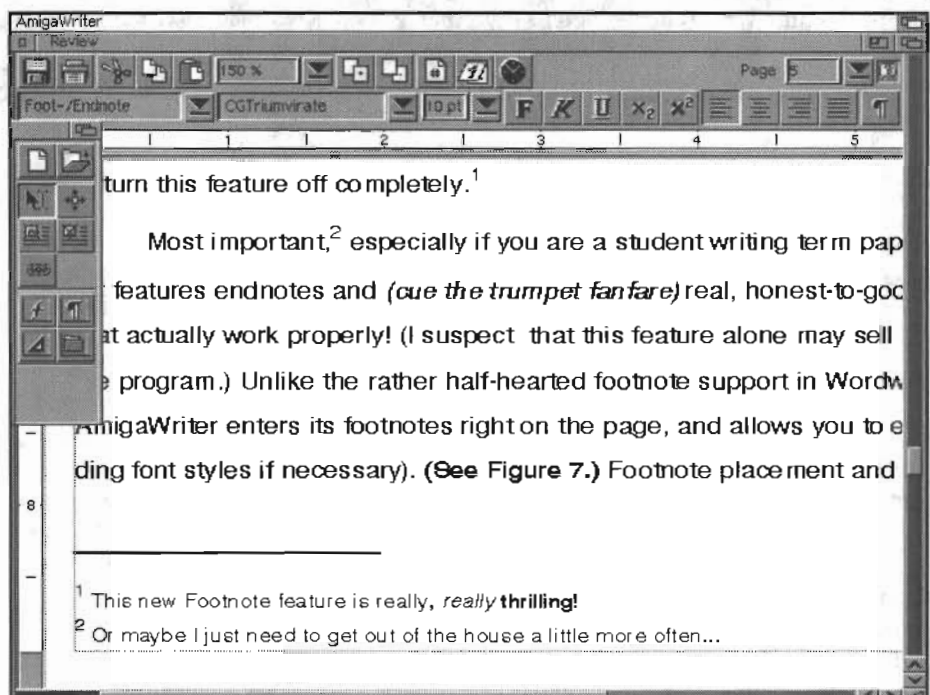


Figure 7.



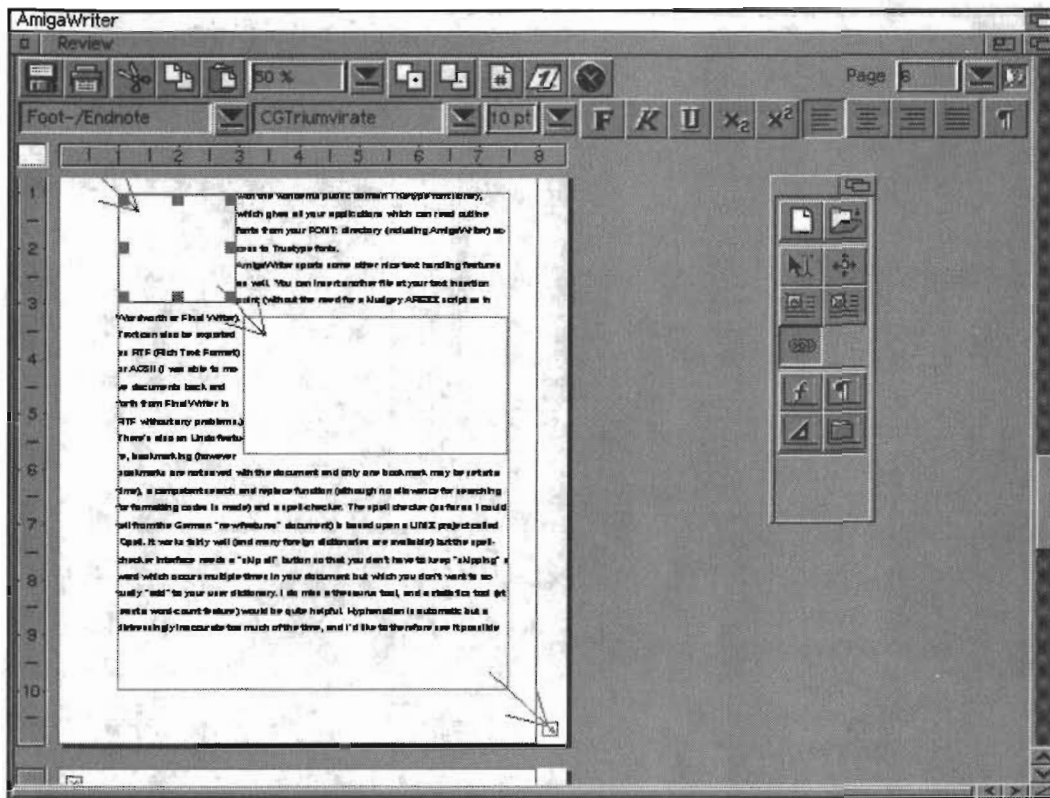


Figure 8.

plate. What's particularly great about these formatting requesters is that as complex and full-featured as they are, they are extremely clearly and logically laid out (tabbed requester "pages" are used to excellent effect) making it a breeze to define your style.

In addition, just about all requesters in AW are "modeless". They offer an "Apply" button which enables you to make changes without closing the requester and to even leave the requester open if you want to go on editing.

Another handy requester feature is a "Reset" button which reverts back to the last requester settings if you don't like changes you've just applied. Of course, it would be cumbersome to have to call up the full, huge requester just to apply a style, so *paragraph* styles may be easily accessed from the tool bar, and *all* styles may be accessed (or modified) from floating "catalog" palettes which may be called from the control panel (Figure 6). Formats may also be imported from an existing document.

AmigaWriter supports Compugraphic and Amiga bitmapped fonts. It also ships with the wonderful public domain Truetype font library. This gives all your applications which can read outline fonts from your FONT:

directory (including AmigaWriter) access to Truetype fonts.

AmigaWriter sports some other nice text handling features as well. You can insert another file at your text insertion point (without the need for a kludgy AReXX script as in Wordworth or Final Writer). Text can also be exported as RTF (Rich Text Format) or ACSII (I was able to move documents back and forth from Final Writer in RTF without any problems).

There is also an Undo feature, bookmarking (however bookmarks are not saved with the document and only one bookmark may be set at a time), a competent search and replace function (although no allowance for searching for formatting codes is made) and a spell-checker. The spell checker (as far as I could tell from the German "new features" document) is based upon a UNIX project called ISpell. It works fairly well (and many foreign dictionaries are available) but the spell-checker interface needs a "skip all" button so that you don't have to keep "skipping" a word which occurs multiple times in your document but which you don't want to actually "add" to your user dictionary. Also, the speller quite maddeningly doesn't understand words

with apostrophes and will, for example, flag the "s" in "it's".

I do miss a thesaurus tool, and a statistics tool (at least a word-count feature) would be quite helpful. Hyphenation is automatic but distressingly inaccurate too much of the time, and I'd like to therefore see it possible to turn this feature off completely.

Most important, especially if you are a student writing term papers, AmigaWriter features endnotes and (*cue the trumpet fanfare*) real, honest-to-goodness **footnotes** that actually work properly! (I suspect this feature alone may sell many copies of the program.) Unlike the rather half-hearted footnote support in Wordworth, AmigaWriter enters its footnotes right on the page, and allows you to edit them (adding font styles if necessary). (See Figure 7.) Footnote placement and editing is still a little buggy (I managed to crash AW on a number of occasions while playing around with footnote editing) but it is still the best support we have on the Amiga.

As in a desktop publishing program, all elements on your page, both text and graphics, are entered into boxes. (There are no free floating text *objects* as in Pagestream, Wordworth or even Final



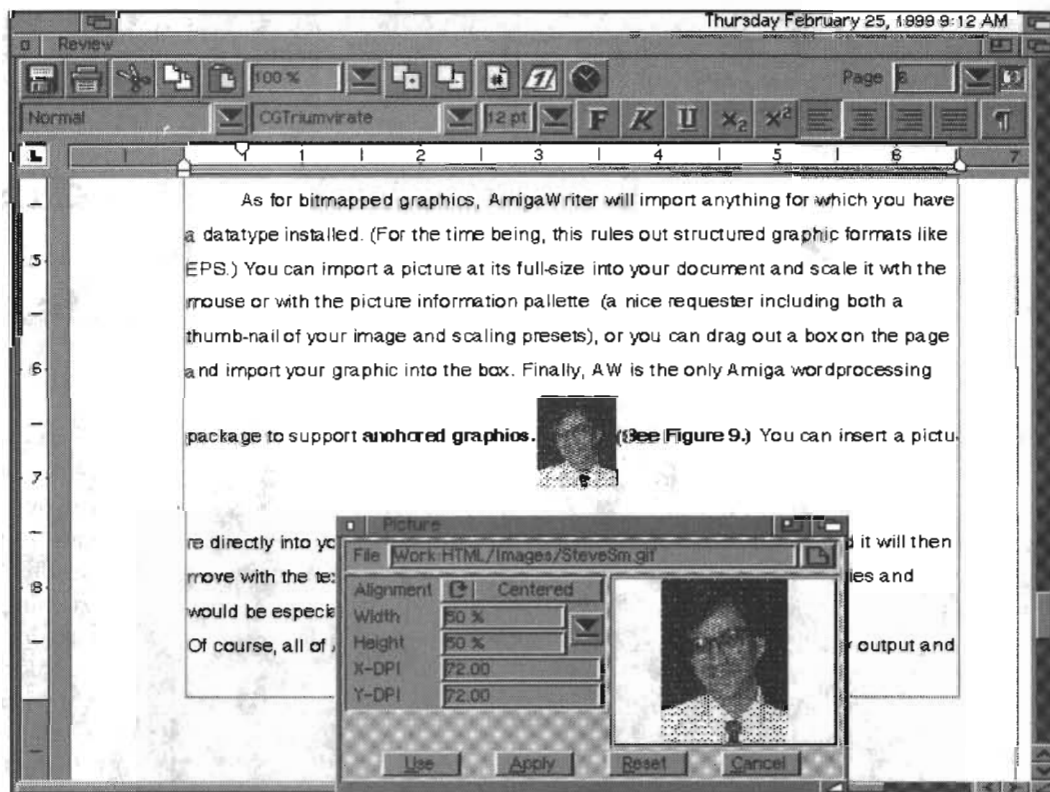


Figure 9.

Writer.) Text boxes may be easily linked so that text flows from one box into the next.

The linking method is a little funky: you select the first box with the text link tool and then drag an arrow from that box to the next one in sequence. (See Figure 8.) A generous box format requester allows you to select things like fill and border color (and as with color selection of all document elements in AW, custom colors can be created with RGB or HSV sliders).

You can also specify whether the size or position of the box is to be locked and whether the text in the box is to be displaced if another object obscures part of the box. A nice touch: you can choose the distance between the four edges of either a text or graphic box and the box's contents. Unfortunately, AmigaWriter doesn't yet permit you to specify the offset or text wrapping *around* text or picture boxes. Also, while the box requester allows you to position your boxes precisely by entering numerical coordinates, the addition of snap-to guides or a grid would be helpful.

As for bitmapped graphics, AmigaWriter will import anything for which you have a datatype installed. (For the time being, this rules out structured

graphic formats like EPS.) You can import a picture at its full-size into your document and scale it with the mouse or with the picture information palette (a nice requester including both a thumb-nail of your image and scaling presets), or you can drag out a box on the page and import your graphic into the box.

Finally, AW is the only Amiga word processing package to support **anchored graphics**. (See Figure 9.) You can insert a picture directly into your text flow, align its top, bottom or center to the text, and it will then move with the text itself. This presents all sorts of creative layout possibilities and would be especially useful for creating captions.

Of course, all of AW's features are useless unless you can get high quality output and in this arena AW also delivers. In particular, AW outputs to TurboPrint in 24-bit color accuracy. The manual addendum also claims great printing speed gains when printing on a system running the Picasso96 or CybergraphX RTG systems, since no slow chip RAM is used in that case. (Not yet having my Pixel64 installed while writing this review, I was unable to test this claim.) The addendum also claims special printing speed optimizations

when printing lines containing only black and white colors.

In my opinion, AmigaWriter is clearly an ambitious new product and I am very excited about its possibilities. It lacks a needed feature here and there (table support, for example, and others as noted above) and it is still a bit buggy (as I'd expect from the 1.2 version of pretty much anything). It needs some speed optimizations (at least on non-graphics-card systems) and there are a few minor places in which German leaks into the English localization. But AmigaWriter is already so feature-rich for such an early release that it deserves your serious consideration and your support.

AmigaWriter is available at a "cross-grade" price to owners of Final Writer and Wordworth for about \$90 US, which includes a free upgrade to version 2.0 when released. Check with your favorite Amiga dealer for availability and pricing.

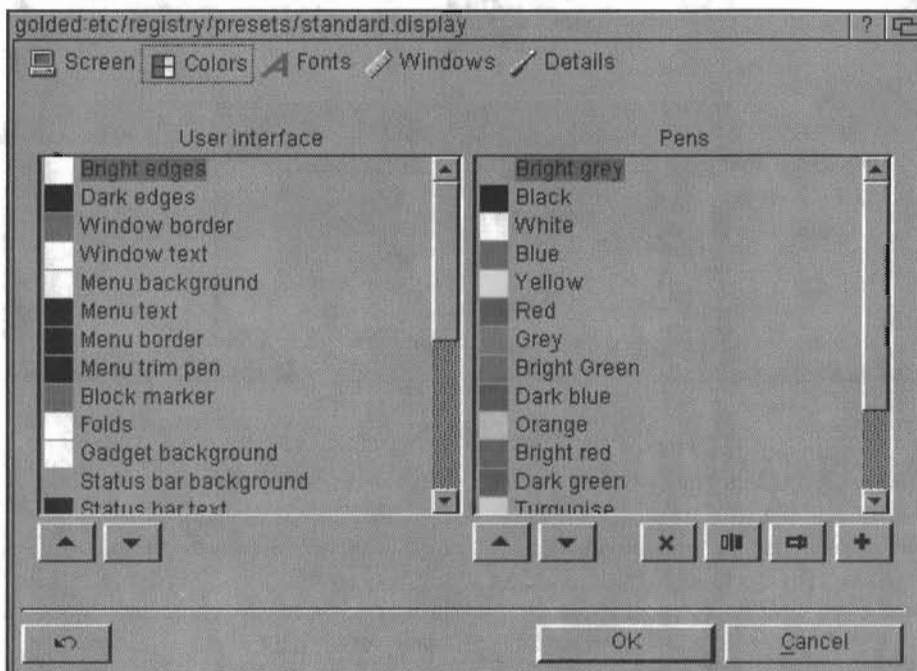
**Please Write to:**  
**Steve Folberg**  
**c/o Amazing Computing**  
**P.O. Box 9490**  
**Fall River, MA 02720**



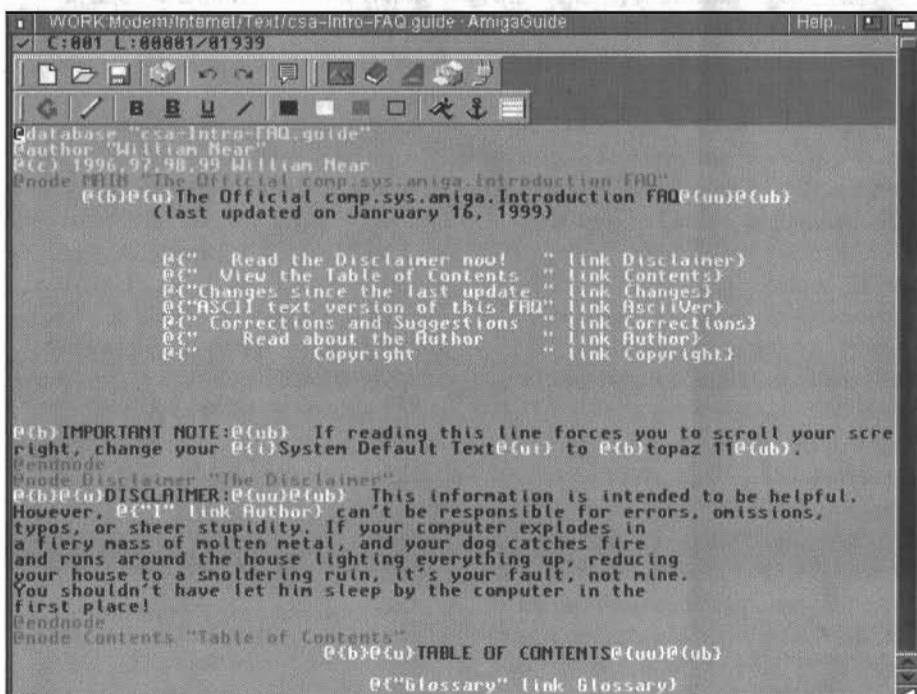
# GoldED Studio 5 v5.1.0

Worth its weight in gold? Whether used as a word processor or a hard-core programmer's tool, every Amiga user can utilize a good text editor.

by William Near



Here is the GoldED interface color configuration section of the display settings requester.



GoldED's AmigaGuide tool in action. The lower toolbar belongs to the AmigaGuide tool, while the upper is the standard GoldED toolbar.

Everyone knows that the stock Amiga editor, ED, that has been included with Workbench since the beginning of time, isn't exactly feature-laden or user-friendly. I, like many of you, have been searching for a "real" text editor for everyday use and specific programming needs for a long time. There are a few commercial offerings, and a ton of PD ones too, but none of them hold a candle to GoldED Studio 5. Dietmar Eilert, the program's author, has out done himself in the latest release, v5.1.0.

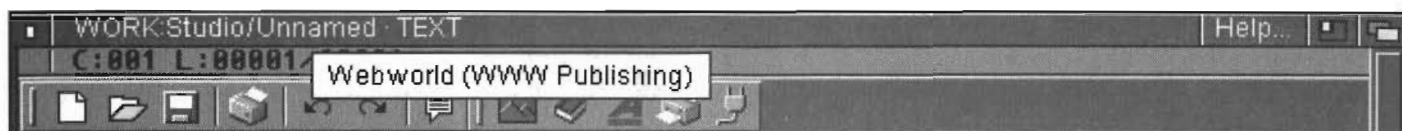
## What's in the box?

GoldED comes on a CD-ROM, CD-R to be more precise, with on-line documentation and no printed manual. You must have a CD-ROM drive that is capable of reading CD-R discs, and a CD filesystem other than the stock Workbench 3.x offering. I chose AmiCDFS v2.40 by Martin Berndt, a Shareware package available on Aminet.

GoldED also requires a minimum of: Workbench 3.x, a 68020+ CPU, and 2MB of free RAM. This does not ensure acceptable performance, though — a 68030+ CPU and 4MB of free RAM will get you in the ball park. There is also support for graphic boards and UAE (Universal Amiga Emulator).

The entire package is a breeze to install via Commodore's Installer program. GoldED can occupy anywhere from 500k to 25MB of hard drive space, depending on which of the three install options the user chooses to utilize (minimum, typical, or user-defined). The major options to choose from in the user-defined install method are: Webworld (an HTML editor), Joyce spell checker (German and/or English with four dictionary sizes ranging from 640k to 3.1 MB and a user-defined word list),





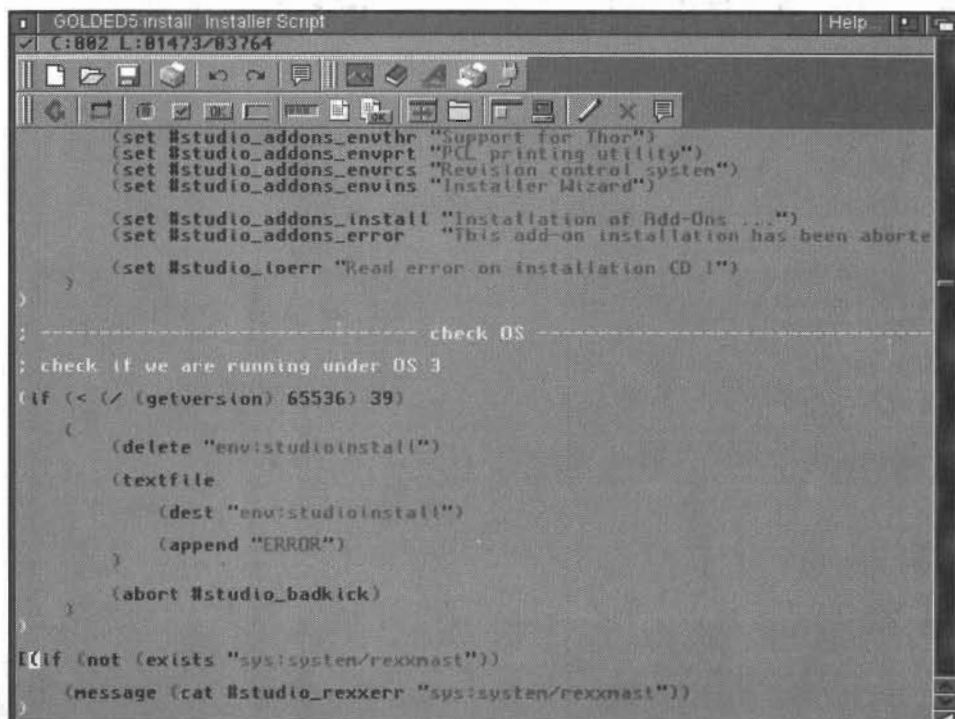
One of GoldED's many context-sensitive help balloons.

Roget's Thesaurus, support for C compilers (StormC, SAS/C, and other compilers) and assembler, AmigaGuide publisher, scripting support, Fax (STFax only), Microdot and Thor support, PCL printer utility, Installer Wizard for easily creating scripts for use with the Commodore Installer, and an uninstall utility for getting rid of all GoldED files on your hard drive (in the unlikely event that you'd actually want to remove GoldED from your system). There are many other GoldED add-ons and plug-ins available on Aminet and the GoldED website too!

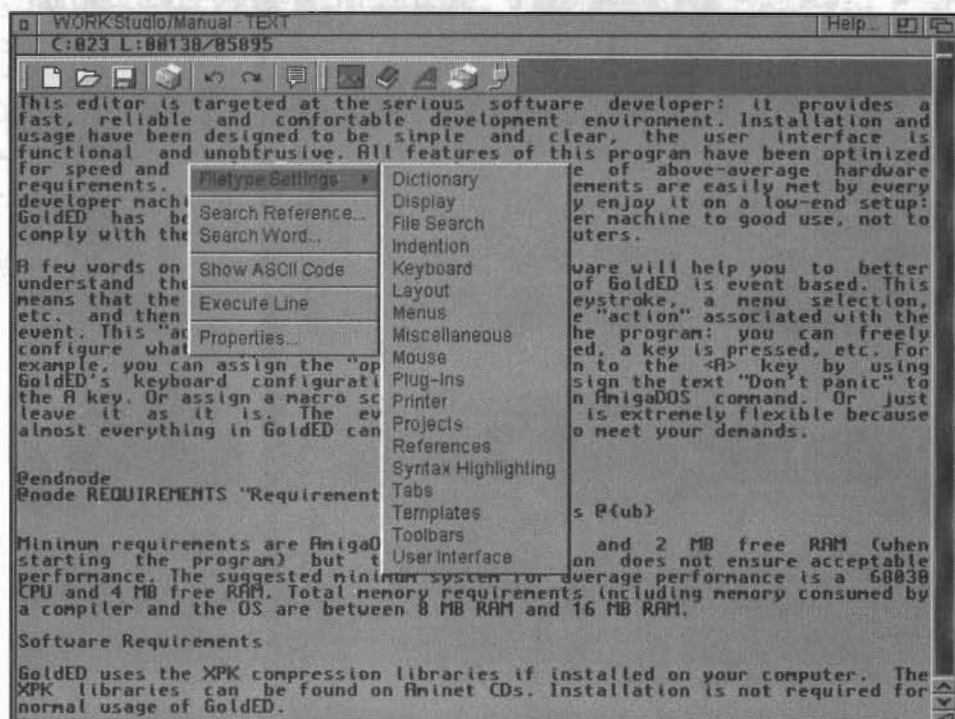
## Go configure

GoldED is a multi-threaded program that allows more than one task to run at the same time without blocking the user from further use during tasks such as printing, etc. There are a plethora of features and options to use and choose from too. Unlimited configurable undo and redo to handle the most daunting programming tasks, automatic backup creation, macro recording and playback, syntax highlighting, word wrap, drag & drop for moving text blocks, and auto-case correction, to name but a few.

The entire user interface is configurable also. The user has control over: fonts, colors, toolbars, menus, and the mouse, plus dozens of other aspects of GoldED's operation. I can't think of anything that's been left out of the user's control. Virtually everything can be changed to the user's liking, depending on how much time is spent on the setup. Nothing really has to be changed in the beginning, but as usage of GoldED increases, many things may present themselves for configuration to one's personal preference.

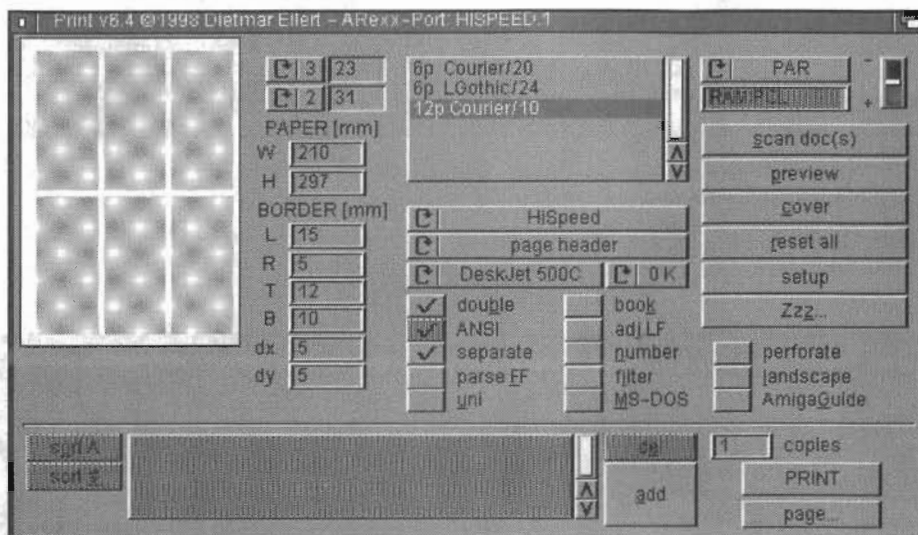


The Installer Wizard shown with the GoldED install script in the window.

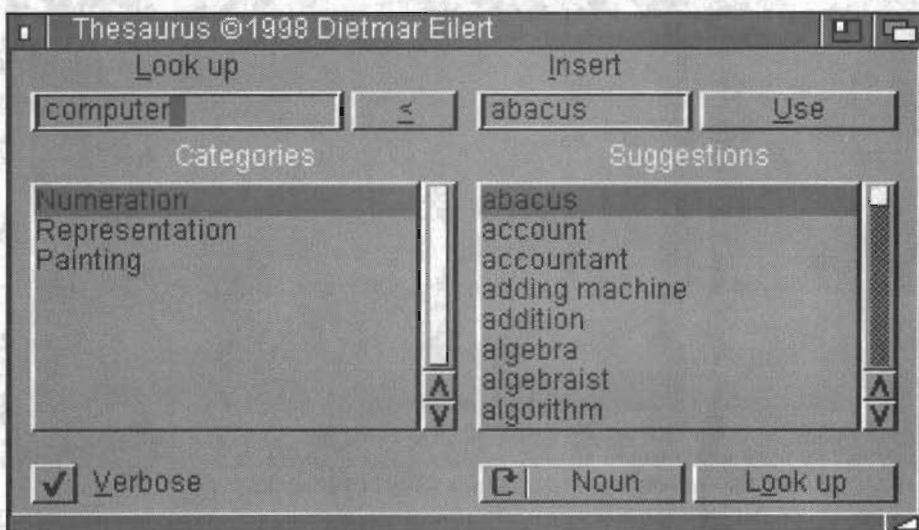


Here the pop-up menu settings for GoldED's operation and configuration can be seen.

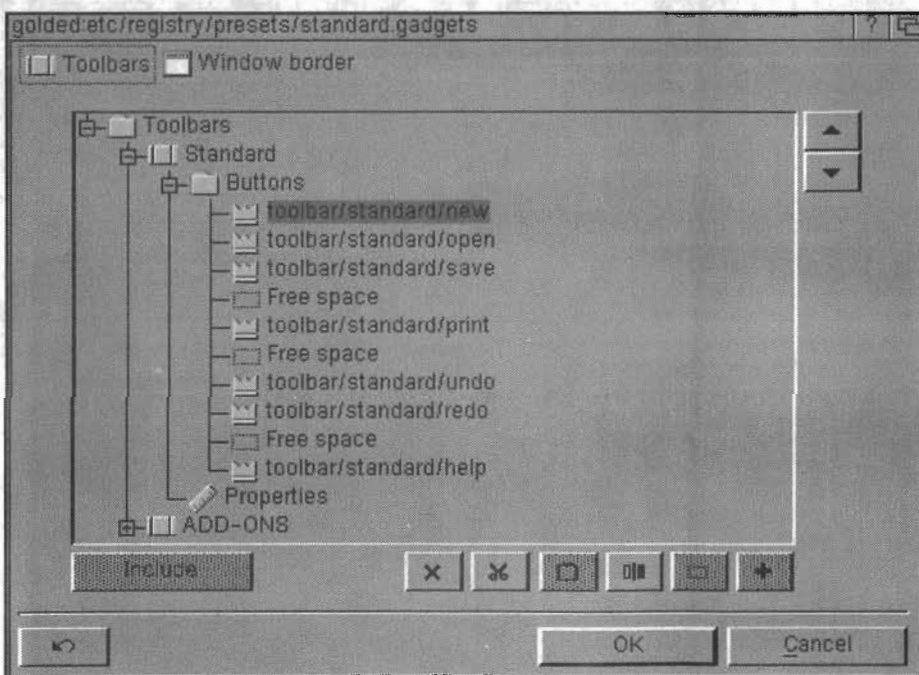




GoldED's print utility interface.



Roget's Thesaurus showing the results of a look-up on the word "computer".



GoldED's toolbar editing requester.

## Usage in the real world

I use GoldED for everything from editing Email, and other text files, to writing AmigaGuide documents and small C programs. I'm not what you would consider the typical GoldED user — usually thought of as a caffeine-drinking, glary-eyed programmer of all things Amiga. I'm the type of user with a diversified range of uses for a text editor. Let's face it, ED is too simplistic and limiting, while MEMacs is just plain confusing, unless you're a Unix lover.

GoldED allows me to write and spell check Email for use with YAM and is a great tool for editing both versions of my Introduction FAQ, which can be found on [comp.sys.amiga.introduction](http://comp.sys.amiga.introduction). It's a breeze to load both the ASCII and AmigaGuide version of the FAQ into GoldED at the same time and then cut & paste the changes from one version to the other.

All of the usual search/replace, cut/copy/paste, and sorting options are available, which makes it a great tool for programmers and novices alike. You can even insert a document into an existing document — a feat which some of the most popular Amiga word processors still can't do to this day, out-of-the-box. The program can be set to automatically save your work in one minute increments, plus GoldED will make backups of your saved files too.

The context-sensitive help balloons are a great thing to have when first learning the ins-and-outs of GoldED. A short description of a button's function can help you to choose the correct button and avoid choosing the wrong one.

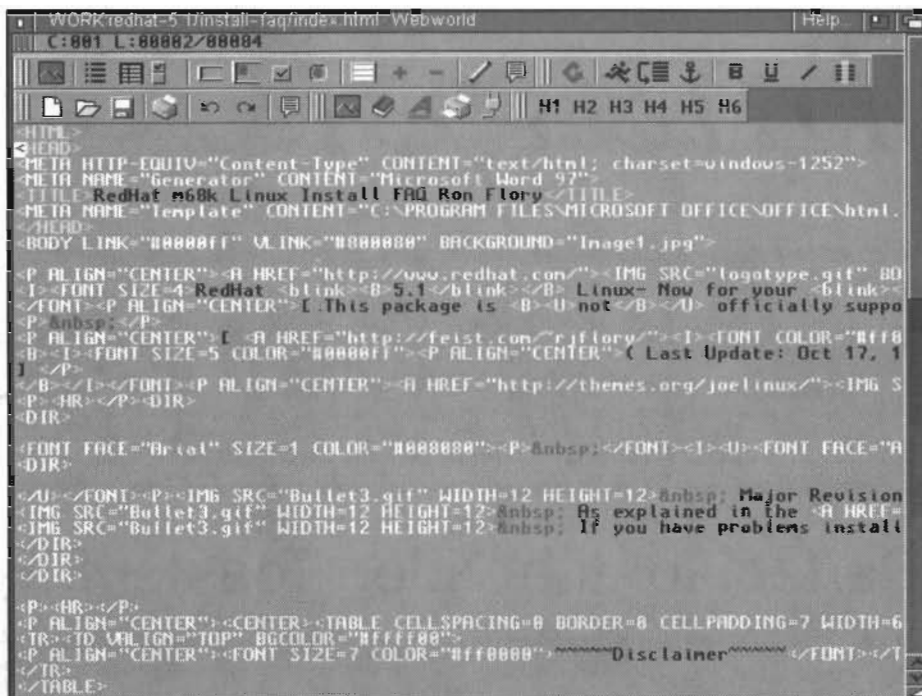
With the attention to detail that Dietmar has used in the creation of GoldED, programmers will love it. Features such as storing and recalling positions, folding, jumping to modifications, inserting special characters and ASCII codes, macro recording and playback, ARexx support, nesting checking, and matching bracket display. If, by some slim chance, the hard-core programmer finds any features missing from GoldED, he can easily go to Aminet or the GoldED homepage and locate just about anything his heart desires. GoldED is a very well supported program.



## The verdict is in

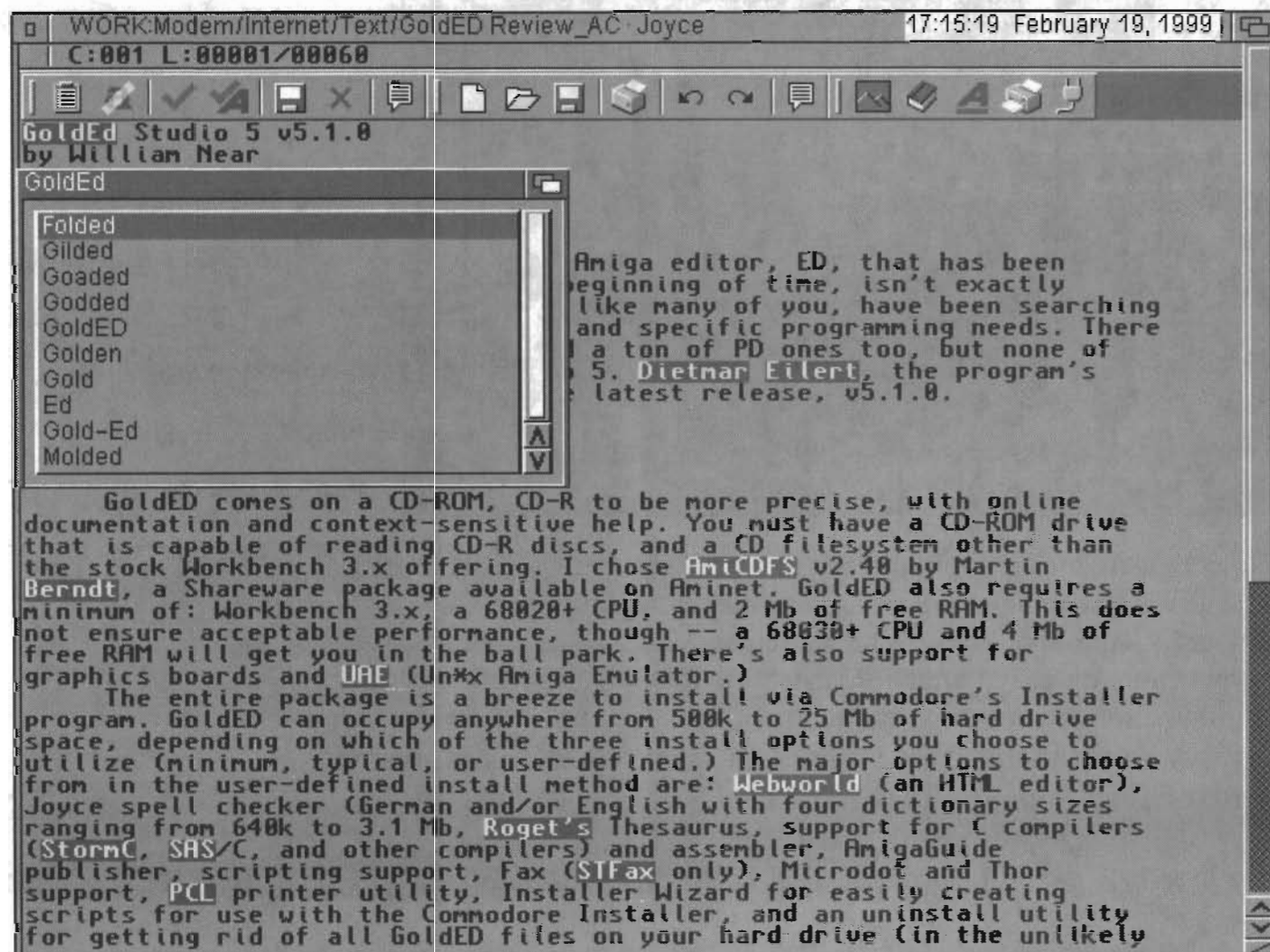
GoldED is an excellent editor. In some ways it is like a good word processor, and in others it is a hard-core programmer's tool. Don't be intimidated by any of this, though. This program has a wide range of use to an even wider range of end-users. Even if you are not a programmer, and if you are, GoldED can satisfy virtually every user's needs in a text editor. Some users may want to just edit their startup-sequence or write the occasional text file or Email — while others may want to create their homepages, AmigaGuide documents, Installer scripts, or C and assembler programs. No matter what your intent, GoldED Studio 5 is an excellent choice.

For more information concerning GoldED Studio 5 check out:  
<http://members.tripod.com/golded>



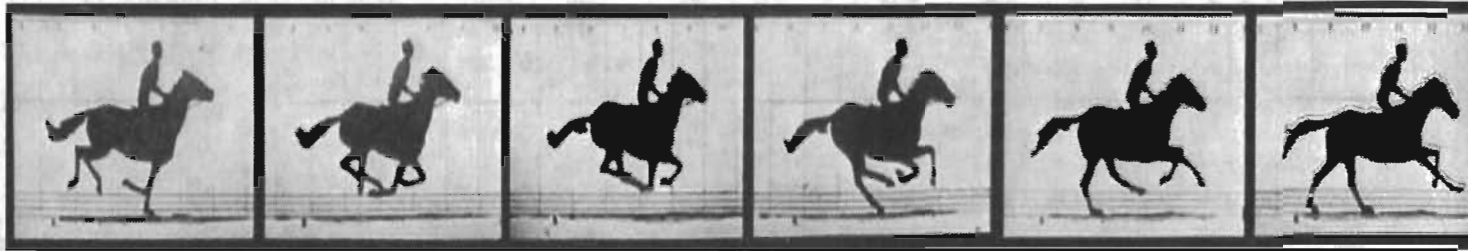
Webworld in use with a Linux FAQ. The entire top and the lower right-hand side of the toolbars belong to this tool.

•AC•

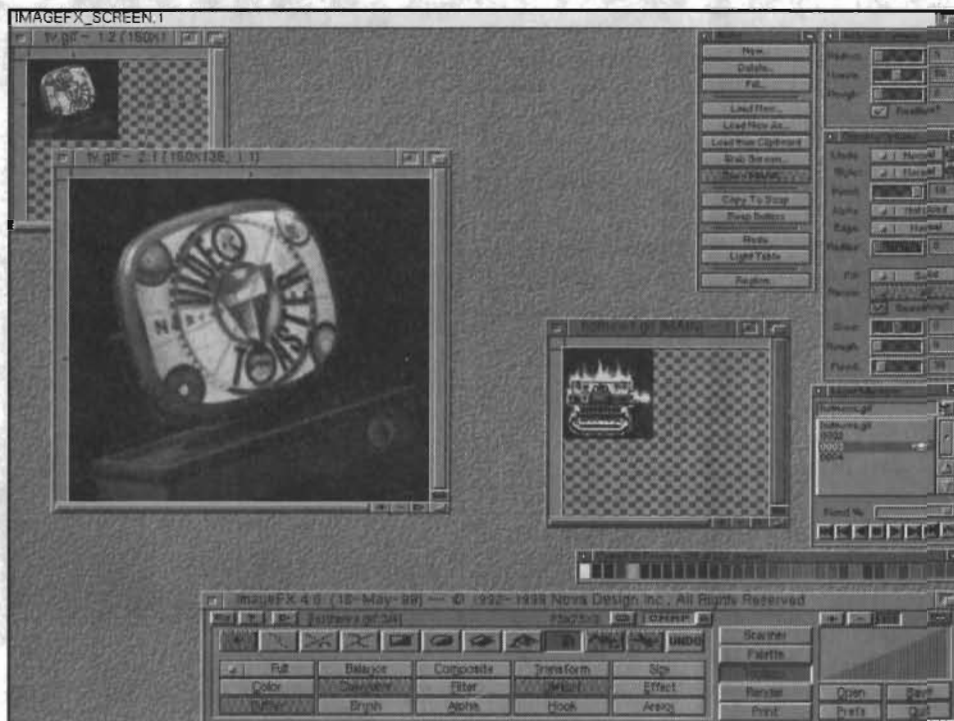


The Joyce spell checker in use. Hmm... it doesn't seem to like my spelling of GoldED, but its suggestions are shown in the requester. As you can see, this entire review was written with GoldED.

# ImageFX 4 - no



Perfect for the Video Toaster/Flyer...



- Video Toaster™ Support
- FlyerClip Support
- Lightwave 3D Support
- Blue/Green Screening
- Warping and Morphing
- Wire Removal
- Image Format Conversion
- Image Processing
- Special Effects
- Batch Processing

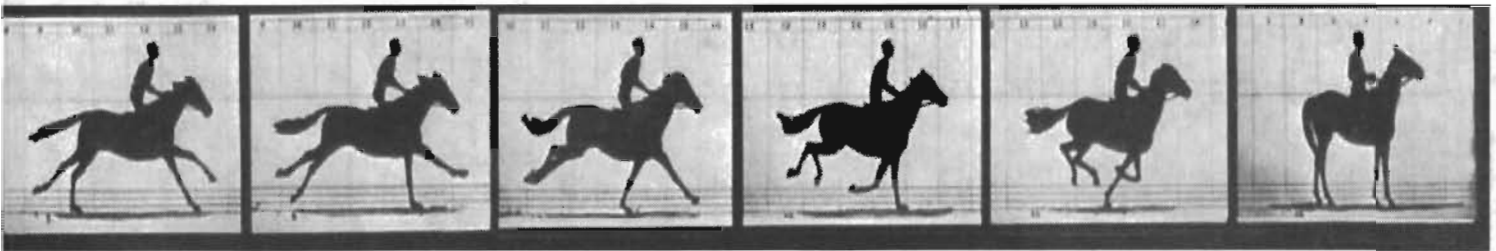
Nova Design, Inc. has built on the windowed interface introduced in ImageFX 3.x with new controls to directly manipulate animations ImageFX. VCR-style controls have been added to the layering system to allow you to move within the frames of an animation or even to playback the animation in your preview window. Brushes can be animated across a series of frames and effects can be automatically processed across frames - all directly within ImageFX!

New special effect modules include Fireworks, Distorter, Blob and more!





# Now it's Animated!



...Perfect for any Amiga

Now  
Shipping!

- VCR-Style Anim Controls
- Full Color Animations
- Built-in Batch Processing
- Brush Movement Controls
- Creates Web Animations
- Creates Amiga ANIMs
- Multi-Level Lighttable



ImageFX now ships on CDROM for its standard distribution and comes with a coupon to order a copy on floppies. As a bonus the CDROM has sequences of images, animations, and nearly the entire contents of our Internet site as well!

If you own a version of ImageFX prior to version 2.0 your upgrade price is only \$149.95. ImageFX 2.x owners can upgrade for only \$99.95. Finally, ImageFX 3.x owners can upgrade to ImageFX 4 for only \$79.95. All upgrades include manual(s) and CDROM. You can order via 1-800-IMAGE-69 in the US and Canada or call (804) 282-1157 elsewhere. ImageFX is also available new from your favorite Amiga reseller for an MSRP of \$349.95.



# Ateo Tower & Pixel 64 Review

**Ateo's tower case, the bus board and the graphics card could revitalize your Amiga 1200 as well as your interest in Amiga.**

*by Steve Folberg*

A couple of years ago, a few of us were chatting on an Amiga IRC channel about upgrades we'd like to see for our A1200s. 68060 cards for the A1200 had just been released, so many of the participants in the conversation lusted for one of those then-exotic beasts. At some point I stopped "lurking" and said, "What I'd really like to see is a 24-bit color graphics card that fits into the A1200's PCMCIA slot!" (Of course, somebody thought I was serious and proceeded to "flame" me for not understanding that the PCMCIA slot on an A1200 is only 16-bit wide, etc., etc... Ah, the joys of IRC!)

Today, there actually are several ways for an A1200 owner to get in on the pleasure of running high-color and true-color, high-resolution screens that leave the old AGA chipset in the dust. (All of them require putting the A1200 motherboard into a tower case.)

The first method to become available involves the use of a Zorro bus adaptor, such as those manufactured by MicroniK or RBM, both of Germany. This solution then allows the use of Zorro II or III based graphics cards like VillageTronic's Picasso IV or phase 5's Cybervision cards. The downside: some of these solutions only offer the slower, Zorro II standard unless you have an A4000 CPU accelerator installed. Furthermore,

by the time you've purchased the tower case, the Zorro bus board, and the graphics card, you're out a lot of cash!

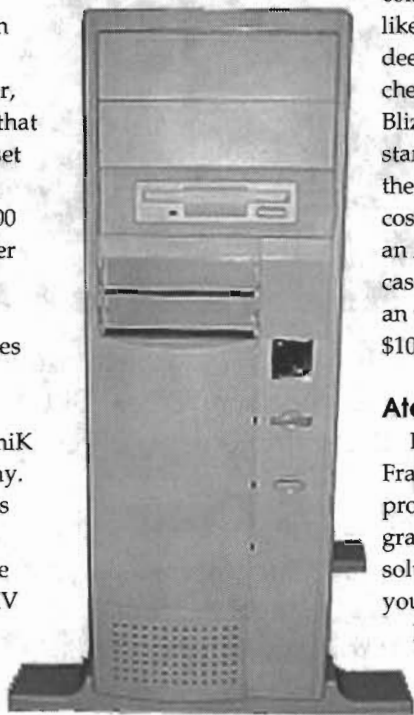
Solution number two is the most recent: phase 5 has released the BlizzardVision add-on cards for their Blizzard PowerPC accelerator card line. These are supposed to be (I've never seen one in action) amazing cards: 8 megabytes of video RAM for fast screen swaps and ultra-high resolutions, direct memory access for high performance and speed, and to top it all off, a Permedia chipset with hardware 3D acceleration (although software which takes advantage of it has been slow in coming). So what's not to like? Again, you need deep pockets: with the cheapest SCSI-enabled BlizzardPPC accelerators starting at over \$500 and the BVision add-on card costing around \$280, add an Amiga-specific tower case and you're looking at an upgrade easily costing \$1000 or more.

## Ateo Concepts

Enter Ateo Concepts of France with the goal of providing an A1200 graphics card and tower solution that won't send you to the poor house.

For just under \$600, you can have a fine custom tower case, the Pixel64 graphics card and Ateo's

proprietary AteoBus system, offering the promise of other inexpensive add-ons



like SCSI controllers, ethernet cards, fast serial and parallel port cards and more. Ateo even claims that its proprietary bus system (a modification of the ISA or Industry Standard Architecture from the PC world) is faster than the aging Zorro standard. The only catch: your A1200 must have a phase 5 or Apollo accelerator card to work with the Ateo Bus system.





It's hard to describe the thrill of kicking your Workbench into a hi-color (16-bit or 65,000 color) 800 x 600 Pixel64 mode.

Randomize of Canada is Ateo's North American distributor. I bought my Ateo Tower, Bus and Pixel64 directly from them. This review, then, really covers three products: the tower case, the bus board and the graphics card.

### Set Up

The first step in setting up this system is installing your A1200's "innards" into the Ateo Tower case. The Ateo case is a solid, all sheet metal unit with a beefy, fan-cooled power supply that gives your A1200 a satisfyingly sturdy home when completed (Figure 1).

Ateo provides plastic spacers to cover any unoccupied bays (I just hadn't installed all of them when I took the picture.) There's plenty of room for expansion, too: three 5.25 inch bays for CD-ROM drives and the like, and two open bays for floppy drives.

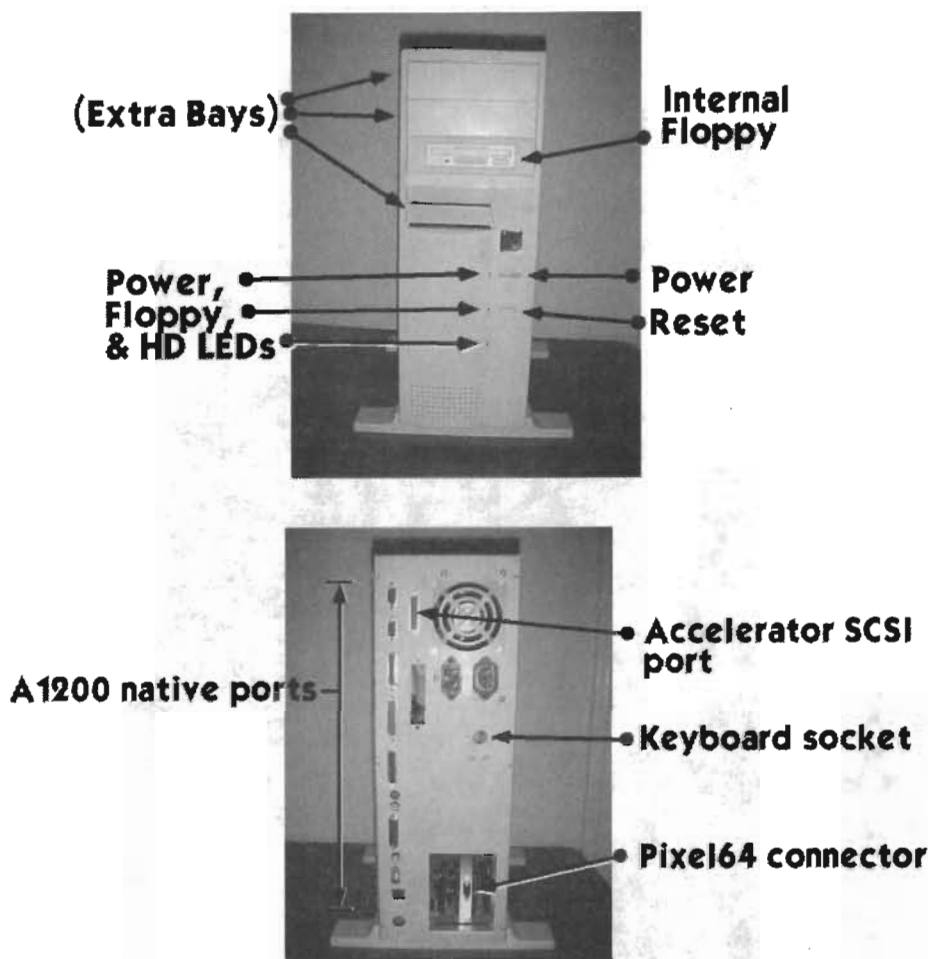


Figure 1 (top) and Figure 2 (bottom).

Look around computer supply stores and you'll find what at first appear to be identical tower cases going for a song, but Ateo has manufactured a custom, specially machined back for the case, with perfectly matched slots for all of the A1200 motherboard ports, as well as a square-shaped break-away piece that leaves access room for any installed Ateo bus cards. It is a very well thought out and executed design (Figure 2).

There are only two design flaws that I can see. First, while Ateo will provide a face plate for your internal A1200 floppy drive, Ateo's supplied face plate doesn't fit the front of the A1200's floppy drive. (You could use the tower without such a face plate but you'd be left with an ugly hole in front of your floppy drive.) The solution? Randomize will provide you, free of charge, with one of RBM's df0: mounting kits. It takes up one of your large bays, but that's not really a problem and the result looks great. (Speaking of extra doo-dads, be sure to indicate to

Randomize if you're using your original 2.5" hard drive with the tower, in which case you will need a mounting kit and special cable.)

The other shortcoming in the tower's design is that PCMCIA cards like the Whippet and Squirrel SCSI/Serial cards are ruled out if you install the bus board at the bottom of the tower as Ateo intends (which is the sturdiest way to do it). There is only about 5 centimeters between the PCMCIA slot on the motherboard and the bottom of the case, and although you could purchase an overpriced PCMCIA right-angle adaptor, your Squirrel or Whippet would then obstruct the slots on the bus board. Having to get rid of your Whippet serial card, however, turns out not to be such a problem; see more below.

They may make more sense in the original French (I took German in high school) but the poorly translated English language tower assembly instructions are, ~~très~~ miserable. Somebody really

needs to write better English instructions for this thing! Fortunately, Thom Mills of Randomize was terrific about spending time with me on the phone answering my questions. (To be fair, someone with more computer hardware hacking experience than I have might have had an easier time of it, but after Thom told me of a couple of customers who'd blown out their A1200 motherboards or Ateo bus boards by hooking up their power supplies incorrectly, I was extra cautious!) Thom suggested powering up the motherboard at various points in the assembly process to make sure that it was functioning correctly (making it easier to catch a problem if it arose). This is good advice. For an extra fee, by the way, Randomize will allow you to ship your A1200 to them and they will tower it for you.

### The trick is

In the end, there are really only three tricky parts to putting the tower together. First, removing the A1200 motherboard from its original "console" case is not easy. After unplugging the keyboard ribbon, floppy drive and hard drive, you must pry apart the metallic RF shielding that surrounds the motherboard and unscrew the twelve little hex shaped screws which fix the motherboard's rear ports to the RF shield. In the end, you have a bare motherboard, a pried-apart RF shield, your Amiga's old plastic case and a pile of assorted screws on the table. And then it hits you that you've passed a point of no return: your motherboard's never going back into that old, familiar case again! (Trust me, it's an unnerving feeling...) Of course, this procedure is common to most A1200 tower conversions.

The second "tricky" and probably most poorly documented element of putting the tower together involves connecting everything to the internal power supply. I must have called Randomize three times to be sure I was getting this right. In the end, power connectors go to the following places: the A1200 floppy connector (which powers the motherboard's sound chips, oddly enough), the hard drive, the Ateo Bus Controller (which plugs in between your accelerator card and your motherboard) and finally the Ateo Bus itself (which



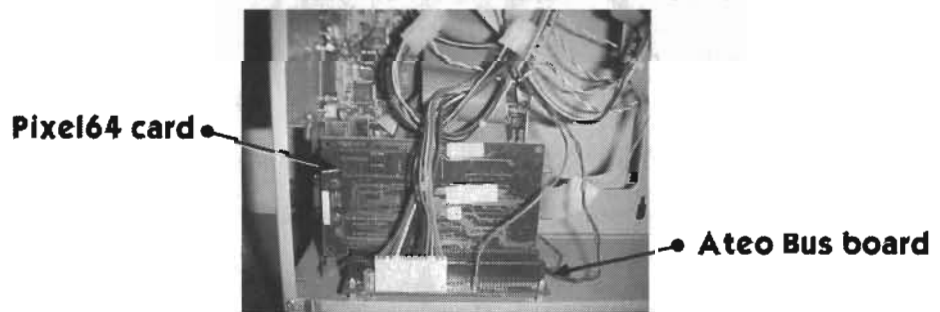
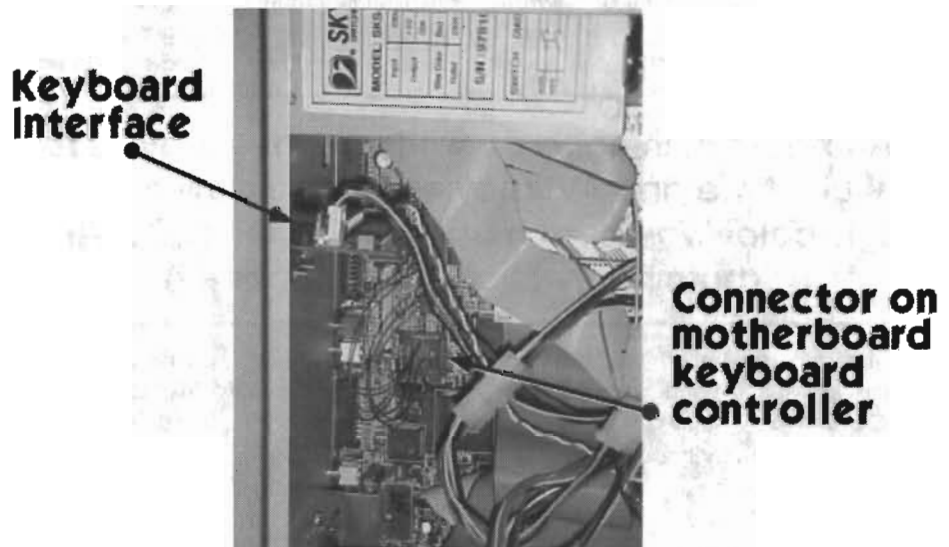
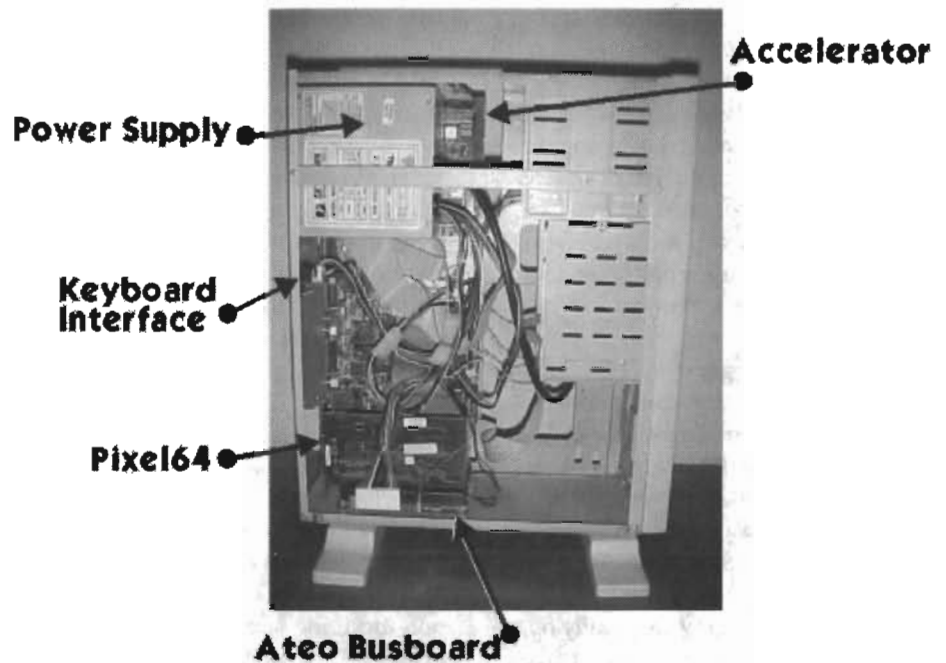
really powers the main motherboard). Ateo also supplies a tiny circuit board which redirects the floppy, hard drive and power indicator signals to the LEDs on the front of the tower case.

Finally, after you assemble the Ateo Keyboard Interface and attach it to the back of the tower case (your PC or Amiga external keyboard will plug in here, and the Ateo interface is smart enough to auto-detect which type you use), you need to plug a square connector over the keyboard controller chip on the A1200 motherboard. The connector is rather delicate and it requires quite a lot of downward pressure to lock it in place over the chip, but once it's on, it's on solidly (Figure 3). It also provides a working hardware reset button on the front of the tower case. Randomize bundles its Ateo tower systems with a Mitsumi PC keyboard. It's a solid unit albeit a little stiff and noisy for my taste, but of course, PC keyboards are cheap enough that you can buy one you like better for very little outlay.

Fortunately, the English section of the instruction booklet for assembling the Ateo Bus and Pixel64 is somewhat better documented and diagrammed. Plug the Bus Controller card onto the motherboard edge connector, plug the accelerator card onto the bus controller, attach the two large ribbon cables which run from the Bus Controller to the Ateo Bus itself, mount the Ateo Bus board on the bottom of the tower case (sticky pads are provided for this purpose), plug in the Pixel64 graphics card into any open bus slot, install the Picasso96 RTG software, and you're ready to roll! (See Figure 3 and 4.)

### The result?

How does it all work? Quite beautifully, actually. It's hard to describe the thrill of kicking your Workbench into a hi-color (16-bit or 65,000 color) 800 x 600 Pixel64 mode. Everything is fast and smooth. Borderless New Icons look fabulous, especially on 24-bit backdrops. Screen dragging doesn't work under Picasso96 for complex technical reasons, but screen swaps are fast as long as your open screens fit into the Pixel64's 2 MB of RAM (swapping between two 800 x 600 16-bit screens, for example, is instantaneous; open a third such screen and you



From top to bottom: Figure 3 through 5.

may see about a half-second black screen between some swaps, as the video buffer is dumped into your fast RAM).

The Picasso96 software provides you with many new, pre-defined, high resolution screenmodes to play with. The system also comes with a very slick, GUI-

driven prefs program to let you define your own screen modes. (The included on-disk documentation is rather vague, but the online docs available at <http://www.picasso96.cogito.de/> are much more helpful, and there is also an active Picasso'96 mailing list.)

Also, for some programs (like, for example GPFax) which don't provide an OS-friendly screen mode requestor, there's the ModePro utility, which will force many (but not all) such programs to run on a Picasso screen. For programs which can't be promoted (like many older games) you will simply have to use your 15 KHz-capable monitor (or a scan doubler) with the Amiga's old video port.

This is also a good place to mention that the Pixel64 really needs a great monitor to show off its best. I was astonished at the difference running it on a high-quality SVGA monitor made (as opposed to my usual and somewhat blurry Amiga 1438S.)

What else shines on the Pixel64? First, Amiga Web browsing really opens up! AWeb, Ibrowse and Voyager all dramatically come into their own with the Pixel64. (This is especially true for AWeb whose image plug-ins gobble chip

remove it with the Pixel64; I didn't at first and got some very weird results, as the Ateo instructions warned I would.

Another fun thing to do with your new card is run Quicktime and AVI movies in a window on your high-color Workbench using CyberQT or CyberAVI (both freely available on Aminet). I have an extensive collection of downloaded Babylon5 clips in both formats, and they look wonderful and play smoothly under the Pixel64, even with my relatively slow CPU.

Another pleasant surprise comes when running PageStream 3.3a under the Pixel64. Not only are the screen updates much faster (e.g., text entry and moving graphic elements around is sped up enormously) but the high resolution, non-flickering screen modes available are great for DTP projects.

For still more fun, get a 24-bit paint or image processing program like Paul Nolan's brand new PhotogenicsNG or

currently suggests using their special 32-bit (true-color plus alpha channel) modes until the problem is fixed, which provide the same 16-million color screen.

This works to a point: I had no trouble running 32-bit screens up to 640 x 480 resolution, but in 800 x 600 modes I got corrupted pixels all over the screen; again, Ateo knows about this problem, but it is only by dialing down the pixel clock that it can currently be solved, and this can result in some mild screen flicker. The Pixel64 will run up to 1280 x 1024 interlaced in 8-bit depth (256 colors) just fine, though. The bottom line: I do most of my work now in 800 x 600 at 16 bits. It looks great, but Ateo still needs to get its Picasso96 issues sorted out.

What about Ateo's other Ateo Bus cards? Ateo has a fast ethernet card which they say is working great. They are having problems with the drivers for their family of fast serial/parallel boards, though, and told me that they are working with another manufacturer of Amiga I/O cards to get this fixed.

As of this writing, a planned internal scandoubler-flicker fixer with passthrough for the Pixel64 is sadly on hold; Ateo needed 150 pre-orders to go into production and has not achieved that level of interest for now. Other products in the works: A 3DFx "Voodoo" 3D add-on card for the Pixel64, as well as SCSI, IDE and 16-bit sound cards for the Ateo Bus system. At current exchange rates, these products' projected prices range from US \$63 for the SCSI, IDE and multi I/O cards, to a high of US \$160 for the sound card. (Even the Pixel64 itself is only 650 Francs, or \$105, ordered directly from Ateo.) In other words, if these cards ever see the light of day, they will be tremendous bargains relative to other, similar Amiga products.

In summary, I give the Pixel64/Ateo Tower/Ateo Bus combination a dual rating of A+ for concept and B for execution, the second grade due only to the current state of the Picasso96 software for the Pixel64 and to the somewhat cryptic Tower/Bus assembly instructions. It's a great way to get tower expansion and marvelous, high resolution graphics on your aging A1200

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## **Another fun thing to do with your new card is run Quicktime and AVI movies in a window on your high-color Workbench using CyberQT or CyberAVI (both freely available on Aminet).**

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RAM mercilessly, but which caches those images to fast RAM under the Pixel64.) JPEG photos on websites look great, with subtle shading and vibrant colors. Screens scroll much more quickly and smoothly than AGA. And as an added bonus, even the Amiga's native serial port, no longer being choked by the demands of trying to run higher color screens under AGA, can be cranked up to a higher serial port speed, resulting in faster downloads, especially if you have a fast modem.

With my 50 Mhz '030 card, I can run the serial port at 115,200 (as fast as I could push my old Whippet serial card) and I routinely get http and ftp downloads of 4800 cps or higher with a v.90 modem. This is again running the browser in a high resolution, hi-color screen mode. (Try doing this on a 256 color, AGA Productivity Mode screen and watch the native serial port strangle itself!) By the way, if you're using the Fblit utility under AGA (it's pretty much a necessity with AWeb) you must

NewTek's wonderful TV Paint (currently available for free download on their web site). There's nothing like drawing, painting or image processing in thousands of colors. By the way, one of my favorite graphics programs, Draw Studio, is slightly flaky under Picasso'96, so "save early and often".

One last Pixel64 "revelation": Microcode Solutions' Fusion Macintosh emulator becomes a whole new animal on the Pixel64. The special Picasso'96 drivers that come with Fusion are so fast that you can run 256 or thousands of colors and really think that you're using a real Mac. Neat!

### **Downside?**

Of course, like most other things in life, the Pixel64 and Ateo Bus have some flaws. The version of Picasso96 currently being shipped with the Pixel64 is somewhat buggy, or at least not totally tuned to this card. Most of the 24-bit ("true-color") screens do not work properly. Ateo acknowledges this and



# TurboPrint Professional 6.01

**TurboPrint Professional 6.01 has support for a wide range of printers, as well as a plethora of features and options to help you control the printer of your choice.**

*By William Near*

## Driving Miss Daisy(wheel)

Due to Workbench's limited support of printers, Amiga users who want professional looking results from their printers, as well as support for almost all modern printers, have to look to third-party software developers. IrseeSoft of Germany is one of the two main contenders in the Amiga commercial printer driver market with their TurboPrint Professional 6.01.

The TurboPrint Professional 6.01 package consists of three main programs: TurboPrefs, TurboSpool, and GraphicsPublisher. A separate utility for DeskJet printers is also included to clean and align the print heads on Hewlett Packard DeskJet printers. Surprisingly, there are no other utilities included for Canon or Epson printers. I would like to see a single utility for all popular inkjet printers. I have been told by IrseeSoft that an Epson utility will be included in the next release of TurboPrint (please see the IrseeSoft note below), but that still leaves Canon users out in the cold, for now.

## Getting started

Installing TurboPrint is a breeze, due to the use of the standard Commodore Installer program. A list of available printer drivers is displayed and you simply choose your printer, or the nearest matching one, and TurboPrint

### Please Note:

*While this article was set for publication, IrseeSoft announced TurboPrint Professional 7. Our reviewers are already testing the new edition and will offer a new report on this improved product in a future AC.-ED*



This is TurboPrint's Config screen. This area is used to set the general preferences for your printouts.



The page size and margins are set in the GfxSize area, as well as the image's aspect ratio.

takes care of the rest of the installation with minimal user input. Once the install is complete, it's time to start up the TurboPrint GUI for tweaking the driver(s).

TurboPrint's GUI is similar to the MUI click-tab approach, with the GUI split up into seven main sections: Printer, Config, GfxSize, Graphics, Text, Poster, and Hardcopy. Please note that



The Graphics area is the most complex of the TurboPrint GUI. Most of the settings for an image's printout are made from here.



Clicking on the Settings button in the Graphics area will pull up this screen. Further adjustments to the printed image are made here.



The Text area allows basic control over textual printouts.

not all options of the TurboPrint GUI will show up for every printer available. Some options are printer-specific, and I am only addressing those present for the Epson Stylus Photo printer. The few

features that won't be mentioned in this review are mainly directed toward dot matrix printers. Here's a breakdown of the seven main sections of the TurboPrint GUI:

## Printer

From the Printer area of the GUI you can add or delete printers from the list of printers in use. There is also an area for selecting the port that the printer is hooked to (parallel, serial, device, or Turbo-Par.) The device option can be used to enter the device name of an optional high-speed parallel/serial board, such as the ioExtender or MultiFaceCard. The Turbo-Par option is one supplied by TURBOPRINT for communicating directly with the Amiga's internal parallel port at the highest possible speed. Finally, there is a print-to-file option for outputting the print data to a user-defined device and filename.

## Config

The Config area allows you to setup the basic functions of the selected printer. The printer's text and graphics print direction (uni/bi) can be set from here, if available, as well as the top margin (the number of lines to be left blank at the top of the page — used for laser printers.) There are print mode settings for black & white, greyscale, and color printing. The black & white option has a further setting for threshold adjustment (with a range from 1 to 15). The print density, paper medium (plain, 360 dpi, 720 dpi, photo, glossy film, and transparency), and print quality (normal or Turbo-Quality) are also selected from this area. The Turbo-Quality setting attempts to give the best results possible for your particular printer, which incurs a speed penalty. Other options available from the Config area are: paper format and feed type, landscape printing, number of copies, wait (used to pause the printer until the next sheet of paper is manually fed in), and form feed after printout.

## GfxSize

The GfxSize area allows you to set the page dimensions, margins, and scaling method for the graphic to be printed. From this area, you can also set the aspect ratio of the graphic via a slider.

## Graphics

Graphics is by far the most complex settings area of the TurboPrint program. There are multiple settings areas for:



dithering method (diffuse, ordered, dot, and line) and size, smoothing, pure black, rotation of a pattern, mirroring the image (useful when printing on thermal transfer paper for placing graphics on a T-shirt or other material), negative, TrueMatch color correction, individual color settings, and separations.

## TurboPrint incorporates a method of matching the printer's output to the image on the screen called TrueMatch color correction.

TurboPrint incorporates a method of matching the printer's output to the image on the screen called TrueMatch color correction. By entering the TrueMatch/Settings area of the GUI, you can then select your specific printer from a list of available models. By selecting the Auto checkbox, TurboPrint will automatically set the UCR (Under Cover Removal) value. Of course, you can override this automatic setting with one of your own. Those of you familiar with the printing business will already have a good grasp of the concept behind UCR values — those of you not familiar with the term will be better off leaving this setting in the Auto mode and let TurboPrint take care of it for you. TurboPrint also has sliders for setting the brightness, contrast, gamma, and color of the graphic to be printed, as well as sliders for individually controlling the amount of yellow, magenta, cyan, and black that will appear in the printout.

One final area of this section of the TurboPrint GUI is the color to greyscale conversion settings. You can tell TurboPrint to adjust the greyscale printout of a color image according to an average of the colors present in the picture, or according to the overall brightness of the picture.

### Text

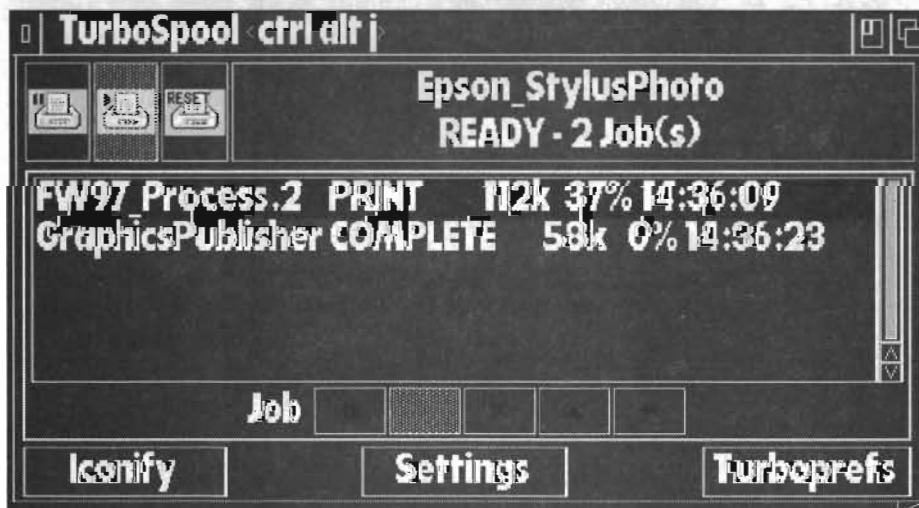
The usual settings for print margins, paper length, print quality (draft/letter), line spacing and pitch are contained in



Here is where the Poster settings are controlled for multi-part printouts.



PowerPC support and hardcopies are set up from here.



TurboPrint's TurboSpool program in action.

the Text settings area. An area for selecting the printer's internal default font type, size and color is also provided, as long as your particular printer supports these types of settings.

### Poster

The Poster option of TurboPrint is a very nice addition. From here you can set up a multipart poster with little effort. TurboPrint will automatically split any



Here is the all-powerful GraphicsPublisher program. The image on the left is straight from the scanner, while the one on the right has been PhotoOptimized by TurboPrint. Also shown are the Graphics Position, Picture Settings, and GraphicsPublisher Preferences palettes.

printed image up into multiple parts so that you can assemble them into the finished product. With my Epson Stylus Photo printer, I can make a poster up to 68 x 88 inches!

### Hardcopy

The Hardcopy option allows you to perform a screen dump to the printer by way of a user-defined hotkey combination. Another nice touch has been added to TurboPrint's hardcopy function — the ability to cut out a portion of the active screen and dump it to the printer in an enlarged state. This area of the GUI also has a checkbox to enable TurboPrint's built-in PowerPC support for CPU-intensive tasks, e.g., color correction and dithering of images. It's nice to see that IrseeSoft has jumped on the PowerPC bandwagon too.

### TurboSpool

TurboPrint comes with its own print spooler. For those of you who don't already know, a print spooler is a piece of software that acts as a buffer between the application generating the print output and the printer itself. A spooler sits in the background and waits for an application, or other program, to send commands to the printer. The spooler software gathers up all of the print commands as fast as the source program can generate them, then the spooler sends the print job to the printer for output.

TurboSpool allows multiple print jobs to be queued up for printing in the order they were received, or you can manually rearrange the print jobs once they are in the queue. The amount of RAM to use for each print job can also be defined — when the maximum allowable RAM has been used by a print job,

TurboSpool writes the rest of the job to a user-defined area of the hard drive.

TurboSpool is an invaluable tool when used with programs such as Final Writer and PageStream. The program allows your applications to generate the print job as quickly as they can, in turn enabling you to get back to work in that application as soon as the print job is completely generated — no more waiting for the printer to keep up with the application. For anyone who has ever printed a large document from Final Writer or PageStream, TurboSpool will prove its worth on the first job.

### GraphicsPublisher

The GraphicsPublisher utility included in the TurboPrint package is a very powerful tool. With this program you can manipulate and print virtually any graphics format.





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With GraphicsPublisher you can place any number of graphics on the page, add text to them, create multi-page documents and even posters. Even if your system doesn't support the resolution or bit depth of the graphic you wish to print, GraphicsPublisher will still allow you to output the graphic to your printer in excellent quality by reading the print data directly from the graphic file on your hard drive. This feature enables even non-AGA or graphic board users to get high-quality output from their printers.

GraphicsPublisher allows the user to: open multiple graphics on one page, set the page size, set the graphics' attributes (size, position, scale, aspect ratio, and rotation), correction (brightness, contrast, gamma, color, sharpness, red, green, and blue), insert and position text, and the usual editing commands (cut, copy, paste, and delete) are included also.

One of the slickest features of GraphicsPublisher is its PhotoOptimize feature. PhotoOptimize adjusts the brightness, contrast, color, and sharpness of the current image. TurboPrint determines the lightest and darkest areas of the current image and then adjusts the gamma, saturation and sharpness of the image for the best printing results. I have found this feature to be invaluable when printing images that have been made with my flatbed scanner. Dull images from the scanner jump to life when PhotoOptimized. This option saves time by making the best adjustments for you before printing the image — of course, you can always override the PhotoOptimize settings whenever you wish.

## Minor glitches

I have experienced a few problems with TurboPrint. When printing from Final Writer 97, my Epson Stylus Photo printer will eject the last page of the print job, but the printer's light will continue flashing until I manually eject a blank sheet of paper. Printing from ImageFX 2.6 also acts the same as when printing from Final Writer 97.

When printing from ProCalc 2 in any resolution greater than 180x180 dpi, TurboPrint doesn't seem to know where the page break should be when printing in Graphic Dump mode. Whatever line happens to be at the bottom of the page

printers, but also for specific monitors — after all, no two monitors will display the same image in the exact same way. Having a system in place to compensate for the various monitors on the market would go a long way in eliminating the need to tweak the settings for yourself — this can be a frustrating ordeal, indeed. Of course, once you have the printer's output matched with the screen's output, you're good to go.

## The verdict is in

TurboPrint Professional 6.01 is a well-thought-out piece of software. It has many useful features and supports a

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**With GraphicsPublisher you can place any number of graphics on the page, add text to them, create multi-page documents and even posters.**

---

will be printed half on that page and half on the next page. Setting the port name in TurboPrefs to my ioExtender's port name (gvpar.device) causes TurboSpool to refuse to send the print job(s) to the printer.

Using the preset TrueMatch UCR value for my Epson Stylus Photo printer does not result in the best quality printouts for images. I have spent hours trying to tweak the settings so that what I see on the screen is what I get from my printer. Even though IrseeSoft has updated the driver for my printer, I still don't think that the settings are right.

Maybe a better approach would be to have settings not only for specific

wide range of printers. With only a few minor glitches, TurboPrint is a fine package that deserves your consideration if you want to get the most out of your printer.

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## Setting fire to your headlines

*by Nick Cook*



As a kid, I wasted many a Saturday morning watching TV cartoons. One show, still with us in comic book form, was "The Fantastic Four". The Human Torch, known as plain Torchie to his friends, was one of the four superheroes. While battling evil doers, or perhaps to hold a wienie roast when nobody was



Figure 1 (Left): The Motion\_Trail effect is horizontal, so that's why the text has to be rotated.  
Figure 2 (Top of Page): The Disperse effect breaks up the lines (top), and the Gaussian Blur blends the dots back together (middle). The Dream operator adds a wavy effect (bottom). If you use your imagination, the text already has a flame look.  
Figure 3 (Above): Use a yellow-to-red gradient for a molten metal feel (top). Blacked-out text (middle) and a trace of red (bottom) adds variety to the text.



looking, Torchie yelled "Flame on"! Instantly, he became a human torch.

This tip does the same for headlines. Shouting "flame on!" at your Amiga's screen won't accomplish much, but ImageFX 3.2 will.

**STEP ONE:** Create a New Buffer large enough to hold your headline.

**STEP TWO:** Make white your drawing color. Go to the Text panel. Enter your headline, then render it. Press "o" on the keyboard to fatten up the text, five times for this example.

**STEP THREE:** Stamp the brush down in the buffer created in Step One. Place the text so there is some room between the top of the characters and the window border. Use Simple 2D Rotate perform a 90 degree rotation.

**STEP FOUR:** Select FXForge from the Hook menu. When the Forge panel opens, load the Motion\_Trail script. This script functions somewhat like PhotoShop's Wind effect. We need to fiddle with some of the controls first.

The Transition gadget controls the length of the lines. Lower numbers translate into shorter lines, while higher numbers create longer lines. The gadget was set to 30 for this example.

Frequency determines how fat the lines are. Smaller numbers mean thinner lines and larger numbers give fatter lines. Set this for 255.

Click OK to apply the effect (Figure 1).

**STEP FIVE:** Use Simple 2D Rotate to go back -90 degrees.

**STEP SIX:** We need to break up the lines made by the Motion\_Trail script. Select Disperse from the Effect menu, and set the Iteration to 1 (Figure 2, top).

**STEP SEVEN:** Apply a Gaussian Blur, found in the Convolve menu, to smooth things out. Set the Radius to 1 and the Width to 1.5 (Figure 2, middle).

**STEP EIGHT:** Flames are wavy, so call up the Dream operation from the Effect panel. Set the Amount to 18 and the number of Waves to 6 (Figure 2, bottom).

**STEP NINE:** Time for some color. Click on Palette, then pick an empty palette. For the example, I mixed yellow in the left well and red in the right well. A click on Spread gave me a variety of flame colors from yellow to red.

You also need to make a range of colors. Click on the yellow as the first color, then pick a range number. Click on Range, then the red color.

**STEP TEN:** Go back to the Toolbox and double-click on the Filled Square icon. Make these settings in the Drawing Options panel: Mode Colorize, Vertical Fill, Rough 10. Draw a filled rectangle over the text. Your flame colors will be applied (Figure 3, top).

The text seems to be made out of molten metal, with waves of heat shimmering off of it. We could stop there, but what the heck. Let's play some more.

**STEP ELEVEN:** Go back to the Drawing Options. Reset it for Normal Mode and Solid Fill. Select black as the drawing color.

**STEP TWELVE:** Return to the Text panel and render the headline again.

**STEP THIRTEEN:** Stamp the letters on top of the flame letters. This creates a flaming outline (Figure 3, middle) kind of like the Zorro's fiery "Z".

**STEP FOURTEEN:** Back to the Drawing Options one more time. Set Edge to Feather In with a Radius of 27. Make red the drawing color.

**STEP FIFTEEN:** Repeat Steps Twelve and Thirteen. This makes the text look a little like lava (Figure 3, bottom). Or charcoal briquettes.

Now you can make your headlines flame! Just keep a fire extinguisher handy.

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# Unix Shell Programming Part Four

## Control structures to modify scripts' execution flow

by Antonello De Santis

In our last article, we examined the first control structure that you can use to give your scripts a non linear structure: the "if then else fi". We have also examined a variation of this construct which is helpful when you have to check more than just one condition: the "if then elif then .... else fi". When you need to check many conditions and accomplish different actions according to the one that is verified, your only choice for now is using a cascade of "if then elif then ...." and so on, specifying one "elif" for each condition you need to check. Such a situation would require a scheme like the following:

```
if [ condition1 ]; then
instructions
elif [ condition2 ]; then
instructions
elif [ condition3 ]; then
instructions
...
else
instructions
fi
```

### Elegant commentary

As you can see, such a scheme is not very elegant and, most importantly, it is not easy to read. Readability of the code is very important when you need to modify something, as well as for people who read it and wish to learn from your work. It is better to learn from the start to write elegant and readable programs.

What does this mean? A program is elegant and readable when its source code is well indented and sufficiently commented. Indentation is the action of writing white spaces in the source code, to highlight groups of instructions relative to a particular section of the script. Comments must be written to explain the most significant parts of the program, this way, when you reread the code, it is easier to remember what action every instruction is meant to accomplish. It is easier than you think to forget what you had in mind while writing a script. So don't hesitate to write as many comments as you want!

### Back to structures

As always, Unix gives you various ways to accomplish different actions, it's up to you to decide which one best matches your needs. The shell interpreter provides you with another control structure that, in some cases, can be used as a replacement of "if then elif then ... else fi".

### The "case" construct.

The "case"'s syntax is a bit more complex than "if then elif then ... else"'s one, but, with a few examples, everything should be clear. Its syntax is:

```
case variable in
  pattern1 | pattern2 | .... | patternN) commands;;
  pattern1 | pattern2 | .... | patternN) commands;;
  ....
  pattern1 | pattern2 | .... | patternN) commands;;
esac
```

The keywords of the construct are: case, in, |, ), ;;, esac.

The "case" end "esac" keywords specify where the case construct begins and ends respectively. The "in" keyword introduces the set of patterns that defines the conditions according to which the script's behavior is altered or not. The "|" is used to separate different patterns, the ")" specifies where the set of patterns ends and finally the double semicolon ";;" delimits the group of commands to be executed if a particular condition is verified.

You can specify as many patterns as you want, if you specify just one the "|" keyword is not needed of course. The "|" is the only keyword that cannot be

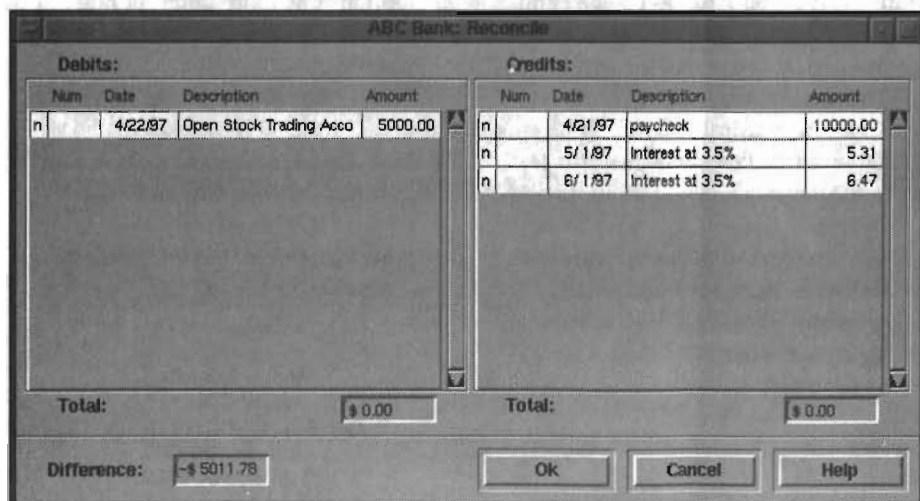


Figure 1. ABC Bank is a very good banking management program.



specified, every other keyword must ALWAYS be specified. It's time to see an example. Let the following script be called "firstcase".

```
#!/bin/sh

echo "What is your favourite computer?"
echo -n "Please answer amiga, pc or mac: "
read computer
case "$computer" in
    "amiga") echo "Good answer!!";;
    "mac") echo "Bad answer!!";;
    "pc") echo "VERY bad answer!!";;
esac
```

The output of the script is:

```
$ ./firstcase
What is your favourite computer?
Please answer amiga, pc or mac: amiga
Good answer!!
```

### Let's examine the script.

The first three instructions print some messages on the standard output and then the answer to the question is stored in variable "computer". Now the case construct begins: content of variable "computer" is compared against every pattern specified in the body of case construct and a different message is printed on the standard output according to the match found. In the example, we answered "amiga", a match is found in the first line of case's body and so the message "Good answer!!" is displayed. The above script has the same behavior as the following one.

```
#!/bin/sh

echo "What is your favourite computer?"
echo -n "Please answer amiga, pc or mac: "
read computer
if [ $computer = "amiga" ]; then
    echo "Good answer!!"
elif [ $computer = "mac" ]; then
    echo "Bad answer!!"
elif [ $computer = "pc" ]; then
    echo "VERY bad answer!!"
fi
```

The two scripts have exactly the same output, but the one using the case construct is more readable and easy to understand. The case construct is more suited to be indented in a good way so that the script's source code is more readable and elegant. This is the scheme I advise:

```
case variable in

    pattern1 | ... | patternN )
        instruction1
        ...
        instructionN;;

    pattern1 | ... | patternN )
        instruction1
        ...
        instructionN;;

...

```

```
pattern1 | ... | patternN )
    instruction1
    ...
    instructionN;;

esac
```

As you can see the above scheme makes the case construct very easy to read and nice to see. Add a few comments and everybody will be able to read and understand it! In our example a good indentation would be the following one:

```
#!/bin/sh

echo "What is your favourite computer?"
echo -n "Please answer amiga, pc or mac: "

read computer

case "$computer" in

    "amiga" ) echo "Good answer!!" ;;
    "mac" ) echo "Bad answer!!" ;;
    "pc" ) echo "VERY bad answer!!" ;;

esac
```

This way it looks much better! Let's try to modify the script to check the content of variable "computer" against several different conditions.

```
#!/bin/sh

echo "What is your favourite computer?"
echo -n "Please answer amiga, pc or mac: "

read computer

case "$computer" in

    "amiga" | "Amiga" | "AMIGA" ) echo "Good answer!!" ;;
    "mac" | "Mac" | "MAC" ) echo "Bad answer!!" ;;
    "pc" | "Pc" | "PC" ) echo "VERY bad answer!!" ;;
    * ) echo "Answer not recognized" ;;

esac
```

The "firstcase" script has been slightly modified to work out a few problems with the first version and to introduce some new topics about case construct.

First of all we have introduced the usage of "|" keyword to separate different patterns. This way we allowed the user to type in the name of his favorite computer in various ways. Now he can type it in using all lower case letters or all upper case letters or just the first letter upper case and the other lower case.

Now suppose the user has typed in "MAC", this word is stored in variable "computer". When the shell interpreter encounters the case construct, it starts checking the content of variable "computer" against every pattern in each set of patterns. So it will start from the first set of patterns ("amiga" | "Amiga" | "AMIGA") where it's not going to find any match.

ABC Bank Register						
Activities Help						
Date	Num	Transfer From	Description	Payment	Deposit	Balance
4/21/1997	xy123		paycheck	n	7000.00	7000.00
		Split	net deposit into bank acct			
4/22/1997	101		Open Stock Trading Account	n 5000.00		2000.00
		Swipe Trading Ac	We are going to get rich!			
5/1/1997			Interest at 3.5%	n	5.67	2005.67
	int	ABC Bank Interes				
6/1/1997			Interest at 3.5%	n	6.78	2012.45
	int	ABC Bank Interes				
7/1/1998			Interest at 3.5%	n	7.89	2020.34
		ABC Bank Interes				
10/5/1998				n		2020.34
				By Date	4/21/1997 10/5/1998	Balance: \$ 2020.34 Cleared: \$ 0.00
Record Cancel Close Double Line						

ABC Bank Register						
Activities Help						
Date	Num	Transfer From	Description	Payment	Deposit	Balance
4/21/1997	xy123	Split	paycheck	n	7000.00	7000.00
4/22/1997	101	Swipe Trading Ac	Open Stock Trading Account	n 5000.00		2000.00
5/1/1997		ABC Bank Interes	Interest at 3.5%	n	5.67	2005.67
6/1/1997		ABC Bank Interes	Interest at 3.5%	n	6.78	2012.45
7/1/1998		ABC Bank Interes	Interest at 3.5%	n	7.89	2020.34
10/5/1998				n		2020.34
				By Date	4/21/1997 10/5/1998	Balance: \$ 2020.34 Cleared: \$ 0.00
Record Cancel Close Single Line						

Top to Bottom:  
Figure 2 and 3.  
ABC Bank register option.

He will then go on with the second set of patterns ("mac" | "Mac" | "MAC") and here it will find a match with the third pattern "MAC", so it will execute the group of commands that begins after the ")" keyword and ends at the ";" keyword, in the example only "echo "Bad answer!!" ".

## Getting Wild

There is a fourth set of conditions in the second version of "firstcase", it is made up of just one pattern: "\*". You should have recognized this character, it is one of the wild cards available in the Unix shell, that we examined a few articles ago. In "firstcase" we used the "\*" wild card to print an error message if the answer the user has typed in, doesn't find any match in the set of conditions we have specified in the first three lines of case's body.

Say the user has typed in "Indigo", this string will be compared with every pattern in case's body; the shell interpreter is not going to find any match in the first three sets of patterns, so it will get to the fourth where it will find an "\*", that it is going to interpret as we would say in plain english: "every string that didn't find any match until now finds a match here". The output then will be: "Answer not recognized".

You can use every wild card we examined a few articles ago as patterns in your scripts using case construct. You will be able to create very complex conditions, that can be very helpful if you need to automate some operations on files using a shell script.

## Conclusions about the case construct.

The case construct will be very helpful when you start writing complex scripts. If you examined some of the many shell scripts in your system, I'm sure you will have discovered it is probably the most used construct in shell programming.

The last note concerns the only limitation of case construct, it only checks conditions against strings, but not against numbers. In the latter case the only choice is to use the canonical "if then elif then ... else fi" control structure.

My experience on Unix systems is that most of the time a shell script is for working a problem with strings and not with numbers. Problems with numbers occur when you program a serious application in C, C++ or perl, not just with a shell script.





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starting pointer in the string and an ending pointer in the string. This process is continued in a similar manner until the entire line is interpreted.

REBOL/Core 2.0 also has a parse dialect that can handle this sort of thing in a very efficient manner, but for the purposes of this tutorial the above method works just as well. 'Parse' is a very powerful feature of 2.0 that suits itself well to very complex parsing applications. It also allows the definition of alternate dialects tailored to particular needs.

Another interesting feature I slipped into this example is the ability to assign a value to a variable at any point during the interpretation. Notice how I inserted the result of 'find' to the string pointer 'html'. This keeps us from having to do the 'find' of "href" in the 'html' string twice.

Our completed function and the remainder of the pieces needed to pull out the links from a list of web pages will look like this:

```
REBOL [
  Title: "REBOL Web Miner"
  Date: 8-Mar-1999
  Author: "Bohdan Lechnowsky"
  File: %rwm.r
  Email: bo@rebol.com
  Purpose: {
    To extract links from our favorite web pages.
  }
]

find-links: func [
  "Finds 'href' links in an HTML page and outputs them as a block"
  html [string!] "The HTML text to parse"

[
  links: make block! 0
  while [found? html: find html "href"] [
    append links (trim (copy/part (next (find html "="))
      (find html ">"))))
  ]
  return links
]

urls: [
```

```
http://www.rebol.com
http://www.cucug.org/aminew.html
http://www.pimpub.com
]
```

```
newlinks: make block! 0
foreach url urls [
  append newlinks find-links read url
]
```

Notice that in addition to 'find-links' there is also a 'urls' definition. This block contains three URLs to process. It could contain any number of URLs without any change to the processing code as the 'foreach' will process them one-by-one automatically. This could have been read in from a text file just as easily.

'newlinks' is a block which has been initialized to hold all the links found from all the sites.

'foreach' is a powerful command which allows the interpreter to pull out items from a list one-by-one each time through the loop until all the items have been processed. This is great for processing lists of items, as in this case. Each time through the loop, the value 'url' which was specified in the 'foreach' header holds the next url to process from the 'urls' list.

At this point, embedded commands are used once again to get many things done in a small amount of space. First, the current location specified by the value of 'url' is read in as a string and passed to our function 'find-links'. 'find-links' returns the list of links found and appends them to the 'newlinks' list.

I hope this has been a good introduction to the power of REBOL/Core 2.0 and has offered some ideas of what it can be used for. Next time, we will expand on this script and turn it into a really useful tool for mining the information you want from the web automatically.

In closing, I would like to thank Danny Ramsey, REBOL Technologies' Chief Technical Writer, and Carl Sassenrath, creator of the REBOL language, for their input to this article.

•AC•

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Fall River, MA 02720

# Amiga's SECRET Plans: part 1

by Don Hicks

On May 26th, Amiga established a conference call opened to Amiga magazine editors from around the globe. Amiga's President, Jim Collas, was honoring a promise he had made in St. Louis and again in his open letters (please see this month's letter on page 6 of this issue) to provide more communication with the Amiga community.

In the office in San Diego with Mr. Collas were Amiga's new Vice President and Chief Operating Officer (COO), Tom Schmidt, Amiga's new Senior Vice President and chief technology officer, Dr. Rick LeFavre, and Jeff Schindler, Vice President of Product Planning and Strategy. Amiga's Bill McEwen was on the line in his office in Washington State.

Mr. Collas began by noting the frustration in the current Amiga market due to the lack of progress over the past several years. He said although many people really want to see things develop quickly, "We can't make things happen overnight, but we can promise continual progress."

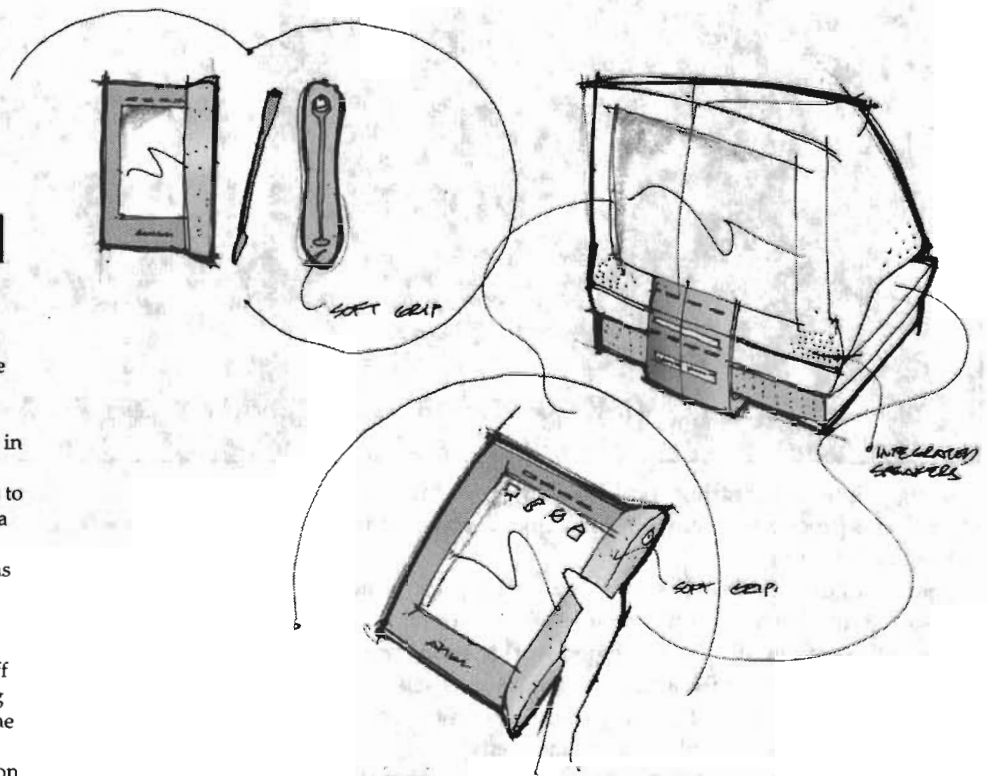
The meeting touched on several items covered in his open letter such as the Amiga Advisory Council (please see page 8 and the form on page 12). He was also concerned with the hundreds of emails he receives each week and does not have the time to answer them all. He then discussed the new concept drawings.

## The Concept Drawings

Mr. Collas discussed the plans released by Amiga by saying, "The Concept Drawings are variations on the same theme. These concept drawings are the first phase of an industrial design process. They are not meant to depict future details. They are really meant to depict the kind of styling we would like in a family of products. The selection we are making now is on the styling relative to the family of products and it has not integrated in the details."

It will not be like an iMac. "The monitor is a separate piece from the bottom base of our multimedia convergence unit and people will be allowed to select any monitor they want. Although we will offer an optimized 15 inch monitor which fits in with the style."

Mr. Collas promised the final unit would be very expandable with USB (high speed serial), firewire, DVD, space for two hard drives, an extra 3 1/2 inch bay for things like a Zip drive or an LS 120 as well as several expansion slots in the chassis. "We expect it to be a very powerful machine and very flexible. Something that ends up as a next generation convergence type of multimedia computer that fits into an overall home computing environment."



These are just three (above, above right and on page 44) of the many concept drawings for the next generation multimedia computer Amiga is planning to deliver in late Q4 of the year. Amiga claims this computer will have a unique architecture, a great operating system, awesome 3D graphics performance, advanced multimedia features, and will be extremely easy to use. AC will publish the remaining drawings next issue.

## Home Network

Mr. Collas explained, "A home network computing environment integrates together, not just a powerful multimedia computer but also information appliances into a single, distributive computing environment that allows ease of use and access to information, functions and capabilities throughout the network."

It is called an "operating environment" because it encompasses the whole environment, all of the devices, and how they interact together. The environment includes, the user interface, a very powerful software structure, connection to the internet, and things like the broadband home networking pieces required.

## Come to the Shows

Mr. Collas promised the details on the new hardware would be available at the double Amiga shows, AmiWest in Sacramento and World of Amiga in London, held in late July. The concept drawings (produced by Pentagram, an outside industrial design firm) will be discussed and a design chosen by mid June. He said the two shows would also be the unveiling of at least screen shots of the new environment as well as models of the machines. Comdex in the Fall will be the site of the actual demonstration of the hardware.

Unfortunately, no current market plans were available for the introduction of the next generation Amiga. Advertising will coordinate with the shipping of the next generation, but they have not decided what this will be.

## Who is it for?

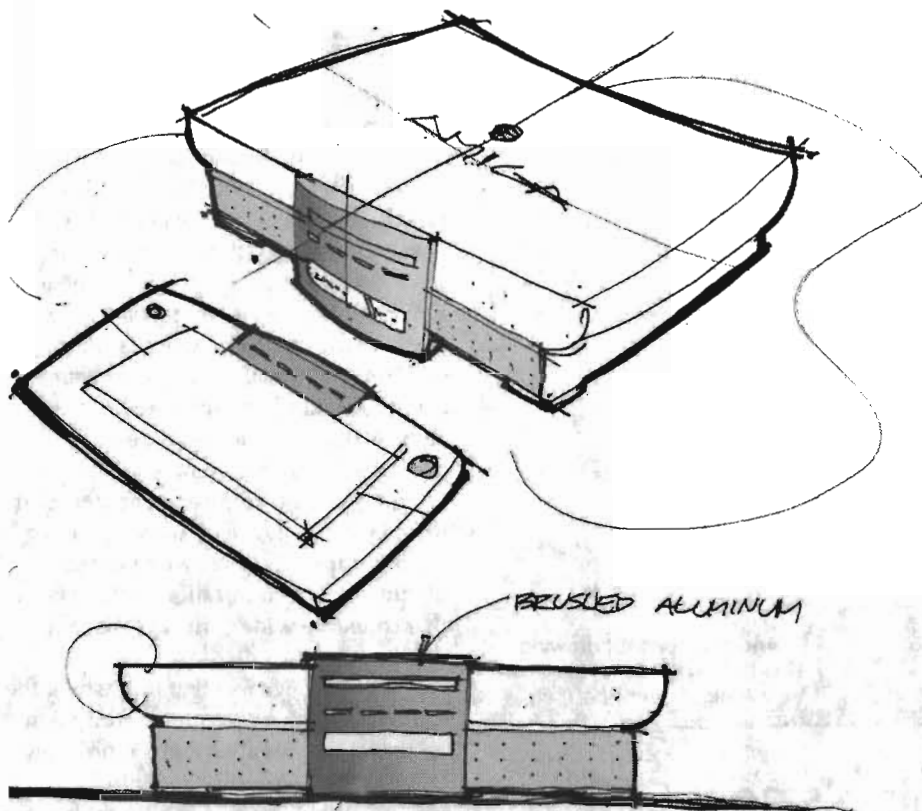
Mr. Collas said there had been a lot of discussion and questions among the users with various opinions. "We need to define a single plan to go forward. The next generation Amiga is targeted toward the Amiga enthusiast environment and we hope to pull in other enthusiasts throughout the world. People who want a new exciting type of computing environment that are less than thrilled with the PC or the Mac."

He noted, "At the same time, we do have to lift this toward the future. We can't just come out with a next generation PC and a competing platform to the PC and Apple and say, 'Here we go, we have a competing platform and now it is going to be Intel, Apple, and Amiga.'"

Mr. Collas said we need to understand where the computer revolution will be in two to three years. "It is not going to be another computing platform that looks like a PC or a Macintosh. It is not going to be something that has slightly better graphics or slightly better CPU performance. It is really going to be something that integrates the information/communication revolution that is occurring. It will integrate all of that into a consistent computing environment for the home. Which includes powerful multimedia types of computers as well as information appliances."

"The Amiga operating environment is meant to appeal to a large audience, hundreds of millions of people, that will be using these throughout their house. But, parts of that environment are meant to appeal to different market segments, the people who will be





developing products for this market, the people who will be doing the types of things that Amiga enthusiasts currently do on their Amiga machines.

"This is a very important market segment for us because it is the heart of the enthusiasts and innovation that occurs in the industry. The grass roots movement of the enthusiasts is important because they point to the computing revolution of the future. So the multimedia convergence computer, I believe, is going to be a great machine for the Amiga community. It is going to be a great way for us to show the power of our environment." He said this is a single piece of a strategy to encompass an overall computing environment and its supporting information appliances which will bring the computing experience to the common person.

The machines in the concept drawings will be available first. "However, we do expect, because this will be an open architecture, that people will bring out variations. I expect there will be tower based Amigas, there will be thinner Amigas, there will be types of Amigas that we haven't even thought about."

"What will Gateway do with the Amiga? My expectations is that Gateway will pick up a few variations of the Amiga. I want to be careful with this because these are my expectations. Gateway is still working on their plans for this new area of informational appliances."

#### Amiga Developer Program

There will be an Amiga developer program to help established Amiga developers provide products for the new platform. This is in addition to two or three larger software companies who will port some of their popular products to the AmigaNG.

The target is to have the AmigaNG available by the Christmas sales season. Mr. Collas agreed it was a very aggressive schedule. When questioned about the need to order and build material now for Christmas, he stated that it depended on quantities. The first release could still be accomplished as late as October of this year.

"I believe that my biggest concern right now is getting a machine out to the Amiga community." He said Amiga wanted to give something back to the community that gets them back excited and stops the attrition of the community, something that they can believe in. While they will have press for the introduction, they do not expect to use tens of millions of dollars in advertising.

Mr. Collas promised Amiga would introduce all products globally. "I consider the Amiga an international global company and launching in one country does not send the right message."

#### Current Supply

A1200s are available. Meetings with dealers and distributors discussed their concerns in order to put distribution channels back in place in time for the next generation Amiga. Amiga will provide more information for the dealers on their web site and provide policies, consistency with volumes, availability, as well as price points for the A1200.

Amiga does not currently have any A4000 motherboards. The A4000 systems and motherboards expected from QuikPak were not in inventory. Mr. Collas said, "We are researching the possibility of assembling some A4000 motherboards, but we do not know yet if we have all the components and if this is possible."

#### Bridging the Gap

Amiga is faced with a problem similar to Apple's introduction of the Macintosh. The Macintosh was not compatible with the Apple II. It was a revolutionary technology and, in order for Apple to introduce a revolutionary technology, they had to leave behind the old architecture. At the same time, Apple's job was to overlap product lines and manage the transition.

"We have a similar type of problem, but we also have one that is greatly exaggerated because of the length of time it has taken to get to a next generation." He went on to say, "I think that, when the new generation comes out and people see it, they will be very excited. They will understand the vision and people will migrate fairly quickly (to the next generation)."

"Until then, we still have a challenge. We need to make sure people understand we still support the current generation and that we are going to help them transition between the old and the new. That will be done through more compatibility, through emulators in the new system and then porting some of the operating environment back to the old system if it is technically feasible."

Amiga's goal for the classic includes Amiga OS3.5. In addition, Amiga will promote a recommended Classic configuration with a G3 accelerator card, enough memory and the right video to run OS 3.5. They will evaluate the products available from third parties, towers, the G3 card from phase5, and using A1200 boards in inventory and put together a recommended configuration people can buy from third parties (they will look at qualifying a handful of companies already doing similar work) or Amiga will piece a system together they will sell.

"I want to be very sensitive to the balance in the Amiga community right now. The Amiga community today and the companies remaining in the community are not very strong financially and I am worried about upsetting the balance and hurting some companies while we try to help some others. So we are being very careful to determine what the right steps are that we should do."

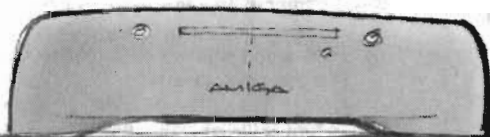
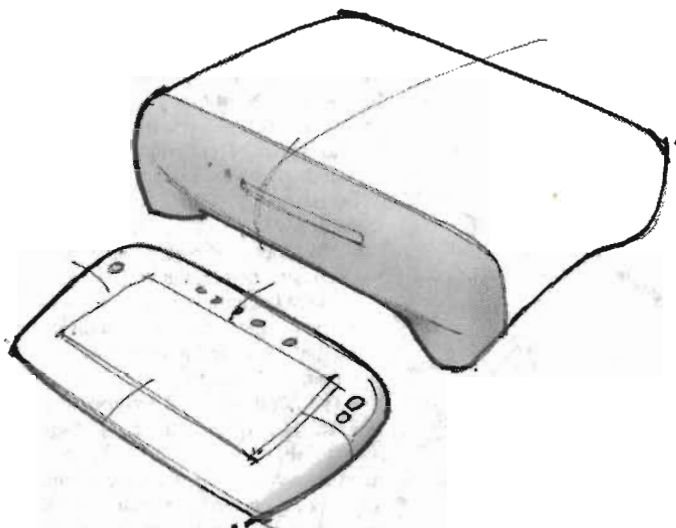
While he did not know exactly how the final product would be delivered, he wanted something that would help the community and provide a solid product for the consumer.

To ease the transition, Amiga is working on how to port pieces of the next generation operating environment back to an OS3.5 recommended machine so consumers will be able to use the investment they are currently putting into the classic Amiga. The future operating environment will be targeted at new hardware, but, in the future, multiple machines with different capabilities will be part of a single integrated operating environment.

"I believe, if we can port the right pieces of our next generation operating environment back to the Amiga Classic, people will be able to use their Amiga Classic machines in that operating environment. It may not be the primary machine they use, but it will be useful. It will allow them to integrate it into the next generation environment. That is our goal. We have not worked out all the details or whether or not it is capable, but that is our goal."

•AC•





Another concept drawing that was "discovered" on Amiga's web site.

## A Letter from Amiga's new CTO

Dear Amigans,

I thought it would be appropriate for me to "introduce" myself to the Amiga community, having joined the new Amiga in April as chief technology officer and senior VP of R&D. Just as Jim Collas is opening up communications channels as our new CEO, I'll try to communicate as openly as I can about Amiga's technology vision and directions.

First, a little about my background, and why I'm at Amiga. I wrote my first computer program (on an IBM 1620) in 1966, and got my first job as a (student) programmer in 1967. Over the past 32 years, I've been privileged to participate in the evolution of computing from the mainframe to the minicomputer to the personal computer to the Internet.

I started my career as a computer science professor doing research in artificial intelligence and advanced programming environments (LISP, SmallTalk, and an AI language I developed in the early 70's called FUZZY). I moved into industrial R&D in 1978, and over the years have directed R&D organizations at companies such as Tektronix, Sun Microsystems, Apple Computer, Silicon Graphics and Borland International (now Inprise).

At Apple, where I oversaw advanced

technology R&D, we pioneered technologies such as QuickTime, PlainTalk, QuickTime-VR, and a host of other innovations that were subsequently copied by our friends at a large software company located in the Northwest corner of the United States (sigh). We also provided funding for the world's first Internet browser, and set up Apple's first Internet web site.

I spent most of my career as a UNIX user and, later, a Macintosh user. I managed to avoid having to use Microsoft DOS or Windows prior to Windows 95, but for the past several years have had the, uh, "pleasure" of being a Windows 95/98 user. I must confess that I have never been an Amiga user, but I was well aware of what was going on in the Amiga community as the Amiga and Video Toaster moved multimedia into the mainstream. People at Apple had a great respect for the Amiga, and the communities always seemed similar to me. I am rapidly learning more about the spirit of innovation that has been at the heart of the Amiga community since the first Amiga was shipped in the mid-80s.

Well, it is now 1999, and we find ourselves at the dawn of a new millennium, and the dawn of the information

age. The personal computer, as represented by Windows PCs and Macintoshes, is now a mature product category, with little true innovation occurring in the PC industry.

What's next? With the PC industry now in its third decade, what will be the next big "S-curve" that will dominate the next 20 years of computing? Clearly, it will involve the emerging global information infrastructure, which is creating a fundamental transformation of business, communications and, indeed, human culture. In many ways, we are transitioning from the era of computing - building faster and faster computers that may, incidentally, be networked - to the era of communications, with powerful ubiquitous communications networks that connect a wide variety of computing devices.

We at Amiga feel that unleashing the full power of this emerging information infrastructure requires much more than a PC with a browser plugged into the Internet. What is needed is a complete home computing environment that ties together powerful multimedia convergence computers with easy-to-use information appliances, all transparently accessing content and services on the Internet.

As Jim has told you, our vision and mission is to make computers a natural part of everyday life by creating an industry-standard systems architecture and operating environment for this new world. In essence, we want to redefine the home computing experience for the 21st Century, combining awesome multimedia, transparent networking and Internet access, and a user experience that makes a computer or information appliance as easy to use as... a toaster!

It's a very exciting time as the spirit of the Amiga starts building again. Personally, I'm thrilled to be a part of the new Amiga team, working with Jim, Petro, Jeff Schindler, Allan Havemose, and the other top people who are being attracted to this opportunity. I look forward to sharing more about our vision, technologies and products in the months to come. Stay tuned...

Rick LeFaivre  
CTO and SVP, R&D  
Amiga, Inc.  
May 26, 1999

•AC•



# Amiga Games News and Previews

by Jake Frederick

## Shogo, ACSYS, Eat The Whistle, and more.

### A few corrections

Before filling you in on the latest news from the Amiga gaming world I would like to say a few things about the game *Super Bubble Remix* which was reviewed in the April issue of *Amazing Computing*. I erroneously reported that there was no quit option and that the game sometimes locked up at the menu screen for no apparent reason.

However, a quick tap of the escape key brings up a message asking if you want to quit by pressing "y" or not by pressing "n". The confusion arose from the message being displayed at the bottom of the PAL screen which I was running in an NTSC mode which caused the text to be cut off. This would also explain why the game ceased to recognize the mouse occasionally.

More importantly was the e-mail that I received from Anonym Software after sending them my registration fee. I was informed that I have been the only one to register the game so far. Hard work with quality of this caliber deserves some sort of compensation, even if it's only a few dollars. The Amiga is in a situation where it needs talented shareware authors such as this to fill in the gaps that are sometimes left by the dwindling commercial market. Try to remember this next time you download a great piece of software. Enough of my ranting, on with the previews. Try not to drool....



Shogo, 3D shooter with anime/manga style graphics, is expected by late Fall 1999.



Rage Of Mages sends you searching for a magical weapon.

### Shogo & Rage Of Mages

Those of you who have been waiting for something to really take advantage of your Power PC cards and 3D accelerators will be happy to know that the PC hit *Shogo* is coming to the Amiga courtesy of Hyperion and Stuart Walker of Digital Images. *Shogo* is a high end 3D shooter with anime/manga style graphics that is based on Monolith's advanced LithTech engine. This also means that the ported engine can be licensed from Monolith for future Amiga games. *Shogo* is expected sometime in the third quarter of 1999.

A few days after the great news about *Shogo* came the announcement that we would be seeing another Monolith title ported to the Amiga. Sanios Software plans to make a conversion of the real time strategy game *Rage Of Mages*. The plot has you searching for a magical weapon that will break your land's ongoing cycle of war. Unfortunately this weapon happens to be located on the island of Uimoir which has become the graveyard of many adventurers seeking the same thing.



Your ACSYS droid (Autonomous Cybernetic System) is on a rescue and destroy mission.

The game will feature over 25 missions, over 50 types of enemies, 300 types of weapons and armor, a number of different spells, scrolls and potions, and multiplayer support for up to 16 players. The requirements are an AGA Amiga with at least an 030, a CD-ROM drive and 200 MB of hard drive space with enhancements for graphics cards and PPC.

### ACSYS

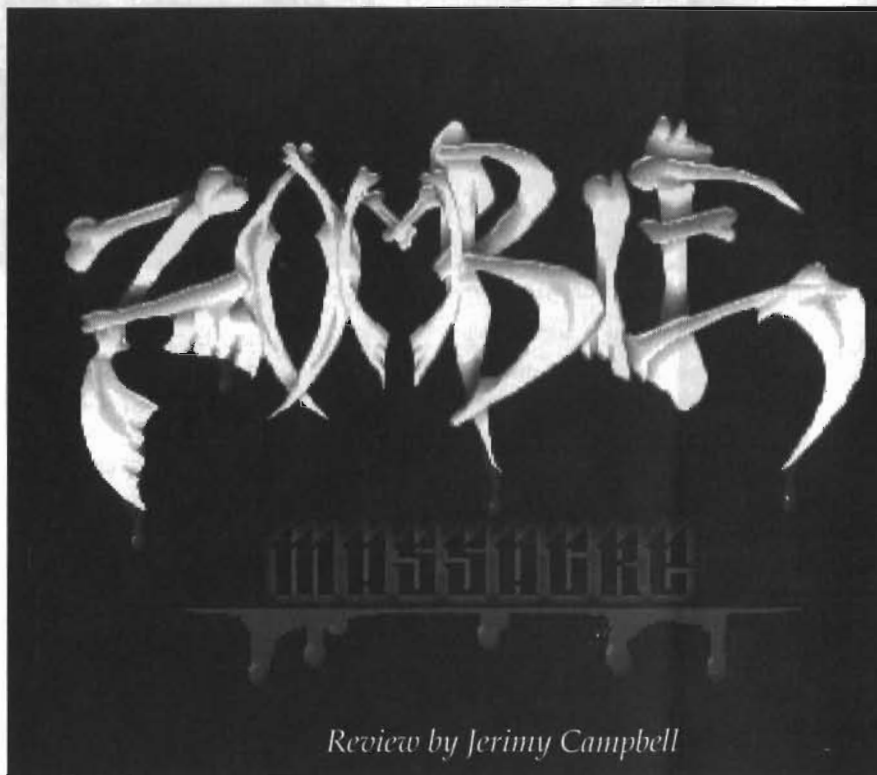
The year is 2074. Mankind has overcome the barriers of time and space allowing him to explore unknown worlds in the deepest regions of the universe. A reconnaissance cruiser discovers a strange structure on the surface of Tegman, a moon of Scarus, and sets out to investigate. The crew vanishes

mysteriously so a special droid called A.C.SYS (Autonomous Cybernetic System) is deployed to rescue all survivors and destroy any aggressive life forms.

The is the scenario of ACSYS, a new Turrican inspired shoot 'em up being developed by Unique. The game will consist of three different modes of play; a multidirectional platform type environment where the player can run, jump, climb, duck, and swim, a vertically scrolling 3D landscape, and an automatically scrolling horizontal landscape. The features include multidirectional parallax scrolling, full screen 50 FPS graphics, 7 weapons (some upgradable) with the ability to carry two weapons at once, 360 degree shooting, three difficulty levels, support for two button joysticks and joypads, and intro, outro and between level animation sequences. ACSYS will require an AGA Amiga with at least an 030, 4 MB of fast RAM and a 4x CD-ROM drive.

### Gilbert Goodmate

Most Amiga game fans will undoubtedly be familiar with Prelusion's point and click adventure Glibert Goodmate and the Mushroom of Phungoria. The game puts you in the



*Review by Jeremy Campbell*

Zombie Massacre is a new CD-ROM doom style game from developers Alpha Software, publishers Islonia Entertainment, and distributors Epic Marketing. When I first heard about Zombie Massacre I thought it was an entirely new title, but as it turns out it's just a sequel to the Gloom series.

The objective of the game is to walk through varying corridors blasting some pitiful and some decent looking Zombies while picking up energy canisters and weapons boosts. It's often not clear where the end of the level transport area is and several times I found myself being transported to the next level even before I finished exploring and collecting all the objects from the previous level.

I did notice some improvements over Zombie Massacre's Gloom predecessors. It has new sound and animated effects, the Zombies' artificial intelligence was improved and seemed to steadily increase, and the overall graphics were slightly more polished. I really didn't notice any changes



shoes of Gilbert Goodmate who is attempting to save his grandfather from execution by recovering the town's sacred mushroom that he lost before their annual mushroom festival. What started out looking like Monkey Island is turning out more like Monkey Island 3 thanks to an ex Disney animator.

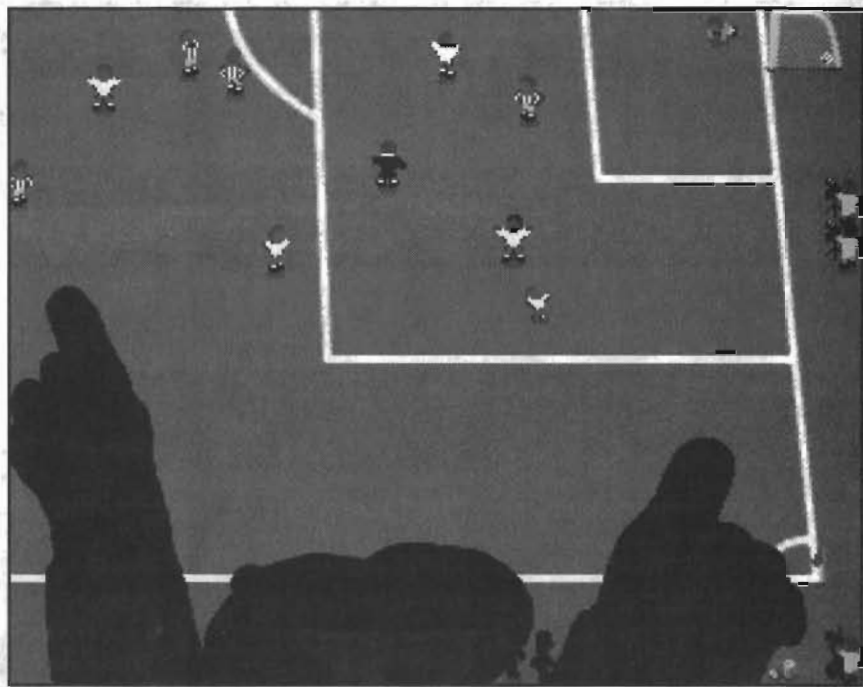
Prelusion is planning a PC version of Gilbert Goodmate either slightly before or at the same time as the Amiga release. The tentative system requirements are Workbench 3.0, an 020 processor, 6 MB of RAM, a 4x CD-ROM drive, 5 MB of hard drive space, and a graphics card.

### Eat The Whistle PPC

Hurricane Studios has become the first company to release a commercial Power PC game for the Amiga. Well, sort of, it's actually a PPC patch for their soccer game Eat The Whistle. Updating allows you to play at 25 FPS in 640x400 on an AGA Amiga as well as adding new fields, enhanced goalkeeper AI, stronger opponents and an offsides rule. The upgrade is free to owners of the 68K version and can be found at [www.freeweb.org/freeweb/hurricane](http://www.freeweb.org/freeweb/hurricane).

### Genetic Species Update

The first person shooter Genetic Species has received another update that



Eat The Whistle, the updated soccer game from Hurricane Studios.

allows graphics card owners to play the game in a Workbench window. This requires the "Picture In Picture" library and a Picasso IV, Cybervision or Cybervision 3D graphics card. It may work on other graphics cards, though none have been tested. Get the update from Marble eyes web site at [www.marble-eyes.dk/downloads/html](http://www.marble-eyes.dk/downloads/html).

If you have any announcements you would like to share with Amiga gamers send me an e-mail at [gonzo@acadia.net](mailto:gonzo@acadia.net). If you're not net accessible write me at :

•AC•

Jake Frederick  
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in the game engine but that may be attributed to the fact that I have an 060 CPU. A machine with a lesser CPU may notice improvements but that's totally speculative as I didn't have another test machine.

Zombie Massacre installs with a custom program that works fine. It creates a drawer named G on your system's S directory and adds a couple of lines to your startup sequence but runs fully from the CD-ROM drive. The game comes with a setup program that allows you to conceivably run it in any screenmode. I found it to be very buggy causing software failures nearly every time I tried to change any of the options. I ended up having to boot my NTSC Amiga in PAL mode and run the game with the game's default settings.

To be fair, I contacted the author Garreth Murfin and he said he's planning an upgrade for Zombie Massacre just as soon as he finishes the current title he's

working on; The Dead Walk (a 3D Zombie game for high end Amigas). Seems Garreth has a bit of a corpse fetish, huh? He was also very receptive and helpful with all the questions I put to him about this title.

There's certainly nothing ground breaking about Zombie Massacre but I must give credit where credit is due. The game did have a certain degree of addiction that kept me coming back for more and it should run fairly fast on virtually any AGA Amiga setup. It's also extremely easy to play. If you can use a joystick then you can start playing immediately.

The documentation is provided on the CD and is adequate, but I've certainly seen better. At \$35.00 or less it's a good value especially when you consider the added goodies like the high quality CD audio tracks and the Full Motion Video intro. Don't expect any Oscar winning performances in this introduction, but it

may provide you with a chuckle or two. As an extra, the CD contains a drawer named Multimedia which contains many extras such as games, music, applications, the Alpha Software web site, and more.

I still can't help getting the feeling Zombie Massacre could have been provided as an upgrade to existing Ultimate Gloom owners instead of as a completely new title. For these reasons I give Zombie Massacre a C rating which I'll change to a C+ if the setup program ever gets a face lift.

Requirements for Zombie Massacre are an AGA Amiga, 10 MB RAM, Hard Drive, CD ROM Drive, with a fast processor recommended. It was tested on an A1200 060, 50 MB RAM, 32X CD ROM drive, and OS3.0. I'd like to thank Software Hut for providing this title at a special discounted reviewer only price.

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